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Kinship of God and Man

Kinship of God and Man.

BY REV. J. J. LANIER.

VOL. I. Good and Evil.

VOL. II. The Master-Key.

VOL. III. The American Church.

Uniform cloth binding, \$1.00 each, Net.

**THOMAS WHITTAKER, Publisher,
2 AND 3 BIBLE HOUSE, NEW YORK.**

Kinship of God and Man

BY THE
REV. J. J. LANIER

IN THREE VOLUMES

VOLUME III.—THE AMERICAN CHURCH

NEW YORK
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What is Meant by Church Unity?

I

What we must do and believe to be Christians.

II

Member of one congregation member of all.

III

Minister in one congregation minister in all.

IV

All else non-essentials.

Preface

THESE sermons were delivered in St. Stephens Church, Milledgeville, Georgia, during the first week in November, 1902, to a congregation composed of Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Jews: the Presbyterian and Methodist Ministers assisting in some of the services.

My sole object was to make Church unity as clear and convincing as possible to this mixed audience, some of whom were for the first time seriously trying to understand what divided the Church into Sectarian Societies, what is meant by Church Unity, how it can be obtained, and its practical advantages when attained. In preparing these sermons I, therefore, sought the best material I could find in print, and used it freely: so much so, that it would be a hopeless task to indicate by quotation points the words quoted from others. Furthermore, it would spoil the page and confuse the reader, whose attention I wish to fix on what is said, and not who first said it. So,

while the material in the book is largely borrowed from others, I trust I have succeeded in smelting it into one homogeneous whole, as it passed into and became the expression of my own dearest hopes and deepest faith.

I have arranged the subject matter in the order it is, because I believe it is the logical order of development through which one must pass before he is ready for Church Unity, or can see and feel the necessity of it; at least this is the way I have traveled: every chapter marking mile posts of personal experience, some of it not pleasant by any means, and I am glad that it is behind me.

This personal note may, perhaps, help some reader better to understand the book. I was reared in the traditions of the most rigid orthodox Baptist doctrines, and at the age of sixteen joined that grand society of Christian people; but by 1884 the basis upon which my faith was consciously built dissolved into thin air. The painful shock started me on the quest for other foundations, if perchance there were other foundations, and haply they could be found. By 1886 I had begun to find foundations that were once more feeling firm, and the more I tested them the more solid they seemed. This ground has been gone over in the two preceding volumes of this work: but

in the meantime I had outgrown the polity of any religious organization in America. When, however, in 1887 the Protestant Episcopal Communion committed itself to the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral, it became in spirit what I thought the Church of God ought to be. At last, it had burned the bridges behind it, and by the grace and guidance of God, had taken the necessary steps by which our "Christian Societies" could be transformed into "The American Catholic Church," as soon as the people could thoroughly understand what had been done. To it, in 1888, I therefore gave in my whole hearted allegiance, and immediately became a candidate for the ministry in this Communion which was building a spiritual house large enough to gather in the Catholic-minded host in America.

I therefore believe that a book containing the best thought on this subject, and small enough to be read at a sitting, is necessary to meet the growing demands and gravity of that problem this age is insisting more urgently than ever that we must solve. To meet this demand I have used every power of statement and condensation I possess, in the attempt to give the *process* by which I have come to see the necessity of Church Unity for "conscience sake"; and in it I think will be found some

things overlooked, or taken for granted, but absolutely necessary to clearly set forth in order to create that Catholic or Cosmic Consciousness, which alone can bring Church Unity to pass: and this I trust to justify the book—another added to the long list of books!

J. J. LANIER.

*Milledgeville, Georgia,
Advent, 1902.*

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Introduction

Brethren :—The purpose of these sermons is to show, that however much Christians may differ among themselves, their differences affect no vital point of religion, but are confined to non-essentials.

That these non-essentials work great harm to religion, and hinder the growth of Christianity in our midst, by dividing the Church into competing sects.

That these competing sects create jealousy among us, foster that pride and prejudice which would rather make a sectarian than a Christian, and cause useless and sinful expenditure of time, money, and men, in preaching the gospel.

So we pray that this week of united worship may, by the grace of God, increase a more truly Christian spirit in our midst, greater unity of action, and closer bonds of fellowship in Christ, in His One Church in this County.

And our ultimate object is to arouse such

unity of zeal, and awakened sense of responsibility, that we will not rest until every man, woman, and child in Baldwin County has, as far as possible, the same opportunity of Church and Sunday-school, that we have in this town.

That this is impossible, as long as we are competing societies, more anxious to build up our own sectarian organization, than the Kingdom of God.

That the gospel can be preached every Sunday, and a Sunday-school maintained in every School District in this County, if the Christians of this Town and County can be brought to co-operate in this great and grand object.

And in God's own good way in the fulness of time, we pray that this may be granted us: Paul may plant and Apollos may water, but the increase must come from Almighty God.

It does seem that this ought to appeal to every one who calls himself a Christian, and believes that the gospel of Christ is the hope of the world. And in order to put this before the people of our county, arouse your zeal and godly interest, I have published a syllabus of these sermons: showing, on the one hand, the chaotic state of the Church of America; and, on the other hand, those few fundamentals which will unite us all; and I trust you will

carefully digest and pray over these things. Perchance, we may be making history here this week, that in days to come will influence the world—God only knows.

I am sure that the times are ripe for such a movement as this, and why should not we begin the movement which, if successful, will be a second Pentecost for the Church of God.

But this can be done only by prayer. We must be like those early Christians in the Upper Room—who were in one place, and with one accord, beseeching Almighty God for the guidance and power of His Holy Spirit. We must all have this prayer upon our lips, and this spirit in our hearts :

“ O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, the Prince of Peace ; give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions. Take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly union and concord : That as there is but one Body and one Spirit, and one Hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God the Father of us all, so may we be all of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify Thee ; through Jesus Christ our Lord : Amen.”

This is that ideal state of the Church for which every Christian should pray and work, while the actual state of the Church has never been better described than in Charles Scribner's Sons' advertisement of American Church History, which is :

CONFUSION WORSE CONFOUNDED.

"There is an infinite variety of religions in the United States. There are Churches small and Churches great, Churches white and Churches black, Churches high and Churches low, orthodox and heterodox, Christian and Pagan, Catholic and Protestant, liberal and conservative, Calvinistic and Arminian, native and foreign, Trinitarian and Unitarian.

"All phases of thought are represented by them, all possible theologies, polity, ritual, usage, and forms of worship. In our economical polity as a nation we have emphasized the importance of variety in industry. We like the idea of manufacturing or producing just as many articles of merchandise as possible. We have invented more curious and useful things than any other nation. In matters of religion we have not been less liberal and enterprising!

"We seem to have about every variety known to other countries, with not a few

peculiar to ourselves. Our native genius for invention has exerted itself in this direction also, and worked out some curious results. The American patent covers no less than two original Bibles—the Mormon and Oahspe—and more brands of religion, so to speak, than are to be found in any other country. This we speak of as ‘the land of the free.’ No man has any property in any other man, or the right to dictate his religious principles, or denominational attachments. No Church has a claim on the State, and the State has no claim on any Church. We scarcely appreciate our advantages!

“Our citizens are free to choose a residence in any of the fifty states and territories, and to move from one to the other as often as they have a mind to. There is even a wider range of choice and change in religion. One may be a Pagan, a Jew or a Christian, or each in turn. If he is a Pagan, he may worship in one of the numerous temples devoted to Buddha; if a Jew, he may be of the orthodox or reformed variety; if a Christian he may select one of the 125 or 130 kinds, or join every one of them in turn. He may be a member of one of the 143 denominations, or all in succession. If none of these suit him, he still has a choice among 150 separate congregations, which have

no denominational name, creed, or connection!"

The feeling which comes over one, when for the first time he contemplates this jumble of things is—"Hooray for free America!" Soon to be followed by a feeling of sadness and shame; and, then, by an honest endeavor to guide truth-loving souls out of this interminable maze of fog. How have people so sadly lost their way in this wilderness? Are there no simple first principles which would bring order out of this ever deepening chaos of clamorous confusion? I believe there are such first principles, and to explain these principles—which the evolution of spiritual thought, we have undergone in the last century, has brought into clear vision of light—is the purpose of these sermons.

We will begin by defining religion, and the facts upon which religion is based, then theology—where division begins and will never end, if we are so foolish as to let theology divide us.

FUNDAMENTALS.

I. Religion.—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is

like unto it; thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." This is absolutely all of religion, which came to perfection in Christ Jesus our Lord.

II. The Facts of Religion.—Religion is based upon unchangeable facts, the substance of which is the Fatherhood of God and the Sonship of Man—the Kinship of God and Man. Around this central fact, and necessarily growing out of this vital and personal relation of God and man, human history became what it is, the essence of which is summed up in the Apostles' creed—the facts upon which religion is based.

APOSTLES' CREED.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth: and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried: He descended into Hell: the third day He rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty: from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead: I believe in the Holy Ghost: the holy Catholic Church: the Communion of Saints: the forgiveness of Sins: the resurrection of the body: and the life everlasting. Amen.

III. Theology.—Theology is the explanation of these facts, and as no one can perfectly

explain these facts, we have no perfect theology. There are as many theologies as there are people who really think about religion, and the facts upon which religion is based. Great Christian thinkers have thought out systems of theology which, in the place of religion and the facts of religion, have become the artificial bond of union and also cause of disunion among Christians, breaking the Unity of the Church into warring sects. The cause of the disunion of Christendom has not been religion, but a narrow and intolerant spirit creating mutually exclusive and antagonistic systems of theology, upon which Christian societies have been erected. Add to this, despotism in Church government, and the attempt to enforce uniformity in the ritual of worship, and I believe we will have the most potent causes of Christian Sectism.

IV. Catholic Theology.—The nearest approximation the Catholic Church has to what may be called a system of theology is the Nicene Creed. Any profounder interpretation or greater expansion of the facts of the universe than is contained in this creed, mankind eagerly awaits.

NICENE CREED.

I BELIEVE in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And of all things visible and invisible:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God, Begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made: Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven, And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father: And He shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead: Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, And I look for the resurrection of the dead, And the life of the world to come. Amen.

V. Catholic Church.—The Catholic Church, by which I mean the Universal Church of Christ, while tolerant of all systems of theology, not destructive of the revelation of God given in Christ Jesus our Lord, is not founded upon nor committed to any system of theology; but is founded upon the facts of religion, its bond of unity being love of God and Man, the breaking of which is schism. The facts of religion are unchangeable, while theology is changing all the time, as we grow in

the grace of God (religion), and in knowledge about God (theology). The Catholic Church accepts all whom Christ accepts, and is tolerant of all systems of theology—Anglican, Roman, Calvinistic, or Arminian—for it knows they will all perish by being outgrown.

VI. The Catholic Christian.—There are Christians in all “the Societies” in the Church of God; for, that which makes one a Christian in one “Society,” in the Church, makes him a Christian in all. There is only one way of making a man a Christian—by “a death unto sin and a new birth unto righteousness,” spiritually and personally uniting us all in God. One can be a Christian without being a Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Romanist, or Anglican. He can be a Christian without being a sectarian, and the less of a sectarian there is about him, the more of a Christian he is likely to be. He has no dead weight to carry. What would you call such a man? He is a Catholic Christian, and wants his “Society” in the one Church of God to be as big as Christ, so that it can take in all humanity—created in the “image” of God.

This constitutes the outlay of the whole matter: in which we will find that systems of theology are ever dying; but that religion, phoenix like, out of the death of the old theol-

ogy, ever resurrects a fairer body of divinity, with which to clothe itself at last, in the temple of its perfected knowledge of God.

So we need not cavil at the past multiplicity of beliefs and strife of sects, as we perceive that denominations represent necessary stages of development in the spiritual life of man. There is much clay in their formation, and all are in a seething state of unrest ; but each is doing its work in ministering to a certain type of mind. Birds molt their feathers because they are growing better feathers ; and so our "sectarian societies" will molt their opinions for which they once stood ready to fight.

That time has come ! By the fusion of these many types of mind, the largest type of man will be created here in America that the world has yet known : large enough to believe in all men—good, bad, ignorant, learned, weak, and strong ; recognizing that night is as necessary as day, all seasons are good, all weather beautiful, the fierce blowing wind purifies the air as running water purifies itself, winter is preparation for summer, death for life ; with insight large enough to see that everything is a part of the great whole, we brother to the bird and animal, tree and flower ; knowing that life is everywhere, even in the rocks—"a square foot of sod at least contains two hun-

dred forms of existence"—that all life is one life, and all life is good ; comprehending that nature makes no mistakes, and that all the seeming errors of men are stepping stones to higher good.

Such is the Catholic type of mind, which has been three hundred years in process of formation on this continent, and will be the mind of Christ in the great majority when the affairs of our nation are turned over to the rising generation of children, who will let the dead past bury its now outgrown and discredited sectarian dead !

I
RELIGION AND THEOLOGY

I

RELIGION AND THEOLOGY

Only one religion—Changing theology—Warring theologies of the sects—Changing theology does not change religion—Incarnate religion wanted—Helpful and harmful theology—The Catholic Church.

I. ONLY ONE RELIGION.

WHEN St. Peter said, "I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him," he had passed through that revolution of thought which makes spiritual geniuses. Before this he was a narrow sectarian, limiting God's acceptance of a man to that peculiar and exclusive type of theology, in which it was his fortune to be educated. But in this remarkable revolution of thought, wrought in him by the inpouring of the Holy Spirit, he passed from the most exclusive of all sects into the one eternal religion of mankind.

One of the most interesting and instructive

books it was my good fortune to read in early years, was James Freeman Clark's "Ten Great Religions." But he uses the word *religion* in the title and throughout the book in the sense of *theology*; for there are not ten small or great religions. There are no doubt ten great theologies, but as there is only one God, there is and can be only one religion, which men believe to the extent that they believe in religion at all: for religion is the same the round world over.

If men agree about one thing it is religion, which never did and never will separate one man from another man. If you find something creeping in, pushing you and your fellow-man apart, know at once and infallibly that it is not religion. For religion is the universal bonds of love and kinship, which bind us all together, and us to God. Religion is the eternal unifying power which makes all creation a cosmos and not a chaos.

II. CHANGING THEOLOGY.

But if there is one thing about which we disagree, and in which, perhaps, it will forever be impossible to unite us, it is theology. And it is well that it is so; for changing theology means, or ought to mean, a more perfect un-

derstanding of the facts of religion, which are unchanging and immutable.

For instance, let us take this initial fact of religion—"I believe in God the Father almighty creator of heaven and earth." All the science, philosophy, and theology, man will ever know or can know will not change this fact one iota. But if theology has not changed this fact, and does not care to change it, it has so deepened and expanded the significance of this fact, until God is glorified in His creation, as never before in the history of the world. Let us take the old theological conception of creation, in two points only: (1) *Size* of creation, (2) time *how long* in creating, and contrast them with the modern conception, and you will see what I mean.

The old conception was, that this earth was the largest piece of matter in the universe; sun, moon, and stars, simply electric lights hung up in the sky to light the earth. Contrast this idea with that changed conception with which later-day theology has made us familiar—namely, that this earth is simply a speck of matter, and that instead of one world there are an infinite number of worlds vastly larger than this, so that *infinite space* is filled with an *infinite number* of worlds. Which conception gives you the grander idea of God, the Creator?

The old conception was, that in six days of twenty-four hours God created the universe, and then rested. The modern conception is, that this earth reached its present form through long geological epochs or creative periods, lasting thousands of years; that when we look out into the heavens we see worlds in all stages of creation to-day, some of them not as far advanced as this earth, and others dead, like the frozen moon. As on this earth men are constantly born and dying, so to the astronomer, worlds are always born and dying out in the infinite heavens, each playing its little part on the cosmic stage of the universe, like the man Shakspeare describes on the human stage. These six stages of birth and growth of life on the planets, are to-day believed to contain the truth dramatically presented in the days of the first chapter of Genesis.

Which gives you the grander conception of God the Creator—to think of Him creating a universe about as big as our back yards, working only six days of twenty-four hours each, and then resting, doing nothing; or to think of Him as creating throughout *infinite time*, and filling *infinite space* with an infinite number of worlds? This alone, to the educated mind of the age, makes God an eternal and infinite creator.

And so I could take every article of the Creed of Christendom and show you that as we grow in knowledge, they each and every one grow in infinite depth and significance of meaning. For in this way alone can we have the universal Creed of Christendom, so simple and sublime that it appeals alike to the child, who thinks he knows all it means; and also to the thoughtful Christian who knows he never will exhaust its meaning through all eternity.

Both alike believe the creed, but it means vastly more to the one than to the other. So these varying explanations of the creed make differing theologies which, so far, is well and good; for rightly changing theology means a more perfect understanding of the facts of religion. But the trouble comes in just here: when one man, or set of men say, "my theology is all right and yours all wrong; and if you don't accept my theology, you can't be a member of my church." This has split the Church into innumerable sectarian societies. Religion has not had anything to do with it at all. The trouble is caused by men who, when they have thought out their little systems of theology, think they have exhausted the mind of God.

As a matter of fact, as the spiritual nature of man goes on growing in the likeness of God, this growth changes our theology to cor-

respond, as the growing life of the plant continually changes the form of the plant—first the blade, then the stalk, then the full ear in the stalk.

The Bible is the history of this full, complete, progressive revelation of God, culminating in the Incarnation of God in the man Christ Jesus. And, as there was a continuously progressive revelation of God culminating in Christ, so since His departure in the flesh, has theology been growing under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, into a clearer conception, and into a more comprehensive grasp of this one unchanging religion which, in the fulness of time, came to perfection in the person of Christ Jesus our Lord.

While it is the glory of religion that it is unchangeable and so simple that a child can understand it, the glory of theology is that it changes, and will continually change, until its ideal is attained in the fulness of the mind of Christ. The growing Christian therefore constantly changes his imperfect theology into a more perfect knowledge of the eternal truth of God revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord. And it is the mission of the divine Spirit to forever disciple us on earth and in Paradise, as we are able to bear it, into a fuller knowledge of the altogether perfect one.

Christ has His little ones in His family on earth in all stages of knowledge and love of Him, as there always is in a growing family. And this growing knowledge of Christ makes changing theology. *If there be any among us, who know the mind of Christ in all its fulness, there can be no change of theology to such an highly favored one, whom the Almighty has so especially taken into His councils!*

The theology of to-day will be sure to be outgrown by the theology of to-morrow. So true is this, that any body of Christians, who build their society upon a system of doctrine, are building upon a crumbling foundation of sand; and will have to change their theology, or have heresy trials, or quench the spirit of truth!

III. WARRING THEOLOGIES OF THE SECTS.

Religion is based upon the facts of the universe, in the midst of which every man exists, whether he is conscious or unconscious of these facts; whether he can explain them or not: for, because of these facts, he moves and lives and has his being, without which he would be non-existent. These facts are summed up in the Creed of Christendom, beginning with "I believe in God the Father Almighty," and ending with "the life everlasting." But the

moment you offer any explanation of these facts, you enter at once into the realm of theology, and in that realm warring factions arise among men, if they do not rise superior to the individual theology of their personal equation: and, if they make their individual theology necessary for membership in God's Church, sooner or later a fragment is broken off, which becomes a sectarian society!

In the explanation of the facts contained in the Creed, it is not possible to unite all men; because they are in all stages of mental and spiritual development. For instance, take this article—"the resurrection of the body." If we insisted upon all people accepting the *same explanation* of this article, as terms of communion in the church, we would become sectarians; and the church would be rent into warring sects, setting up rival communions over differing interpretations of this unimportant matter of *the method* of the resurrection of the body. Even to-day among Christians, some believe that the identical particles of the flesh-body put away in the grave are at some far distant day reunited to the same spirit they once clothed. They certainly ought to be indulged in getting all the happiness they can out of this unimportant belief. Any one who believes this is just as orthodox as I am, be-

cause it is not a part of the Christian faith; but a "pious opinion" growing out of one's education and personal equation.

What is it that binds the family together? It is not knowledge—for you have the infant of a day old at one end, and the profound scholar of a gray-headed father at the other. It is not sex—for you have brother and sister. It is not wealth—for you have rich and poor. What then is it that binds the family together, composed of so different and diverse elements? It is kinship—sharers of a common nature, by virtue of having the same father and mother—for kinship cuts to the foundation of the universe!

If you were to apply the test of being members of the same family, that Christians have thought necessary for membership in the Church of God, you would split every family in this land all to pieces. The babies would be in one family by themselves, the grown folks in another, the blue-eyed ones in another family, the red-headed ones in still another, until you would absolutely destroy the idea of the family altogether, having nothing but a chaos of separate, disjointed, disconnected individuals.

As nothing less than a common basis of kinship and love can bind the family together, so

nothing less can bind the universe of God together—which is His church.

So the kinship of creation and redemption binds us all together in the one immutable family of God: and the facts of this universal kinship make the Creed of Christendom—called the Apostles' Creed.

And as Bishop Westcott has said: "No interpretation of these great facts is added. They belong to life. They are in themselves unchangeable. They stand before us forever in their sublime majesty, part of the History of the World. But as the years teach us more of the conditions of our own present existence, we see more of the divine revelation which they convey. So we interpret them for ourselves: but we shall be slow to place our conclusions, even the simplest, by the side of the primary facts."

IV. CHANGING THEOLOGY DOES NOT CHANGE RELIGION.

So every man, who really thinks for himself at all, must rediscover and remake into his own personality every phase of the world-old theology through which mankind has passed; for theology is the systematized knowledge, real or imagined, by which we give a reasoned account of the universe to ourselves. The

facts of religion have the same relation to theology that the sun, moon, and stars have to astronomy. The astronomy may be all wrong, but the relation the heavenly bodies have the one to the other changes not; so theology may be wrong, certainly always imperfect, but religion changes not, being the physical, mental, and spiritual relationships of the universe as stated in the Apostles' Creed.

In olden times the Ptolemaic system of astronomy was accepted, because it satisfactorily explained to the ancients the relationship of the heavenly bodies—as they understood them. But to-day all this astronomy is upset, and in its place we have the Copernican system; and should this system, like its predecessor, go up in smoke and out in ashes, the eternal relations of the heavenly bodies would change not, but go on chanting their wondrous music as when the morning stars sang together. Changing astronomy does not change the stars: neither does changing theology change religion.

There are Mohammedan, Jewish, Christian, and innumerable other theologies; but the religion of all these is the same to the extent they have any religion at all. Most of the religion of the world is in the heavens and not upon the earth; in the clouds and not on

the streets and in the market-places—so much so that the brotherhood of man is, as far as race prejudice, commercial greed, and our sectarian societies can make it, an “iridescent dream.”

V. INCARNATE RELIGION WANTED.

What has always been wanted is an incarnate religion—heart and brain, hand and foot, spirit and body, laid upon the altar dedicated to the service of God and man—the religion of Jesus Christ. Every heart throb of that man, every thought of His brain, every syllable of His lips, was incarnate religion. No act of His injured any man but helped all. Every touch brought health, every word brought forth light, His very presence brought life. He was in Himself the glorification of God and man. In Him, lo since creation's dawn began, religion lives, breathes, and walks among men. His religion is love of God and man, and His theology is but the explanation of His religion. His highest praise is that He went about doing good.

Every man, who thus walks in this path of righteousness, will some day wake up in the presence of God. No matter how crude, imperfect, or erroneous one's theology may be to start with, if his acts square with love of God

and man, and his conscience is kept responsive to the highest light vouchsafed him, he will be borne heavenward upon the wings of a mighty angel. Only so was the world gradually led into the fulness of that knowledge of God we have in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The path of service and helpfulness to man is the only path of light to God. A man, who knows nothing about our theology and loves his neighbor, is a better Christian than the man who thinks the profoundest things about religion, and doesn't love his neighbor. And just here these beautiful words of Leigh Hunt come into my mind.

"Abu Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
An angel writing in a book of gold.
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
'What writest thou?' The vision raised its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, 'The names of those who love the Lord.'
'And is mine one?' said Abu. 'Nay, not so,'
Replied the angel. Abu spake more low,
But cheerly still, and said, 'I pray thee then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men.'
The angel wrote and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great awaking light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed.
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest!"

Of course no one places a higher value than I do upon the necessity of theology, and its inseparableness from religion ; for every person who thinks about religion will formulate some kind of theology, but I wish you to see that theology and religion are two distinct things.

I am answering the question once asked me in a Sunday-school class—Can a Jew get to heaven ? That little girl is making the same mistake a great many grown up people are making : that theology—thinking about religion—carries one to heaven, and not religion—the thing in itself ; for heaven is here and now as well as there and over yonder, for heaven is righteous dealing, love that goes up to God as worship and down to man as helping service ; love, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit—*the reproduction of Christ in us !*

The Jew may reject a great deal of what is called Christian theology—as Christians themselves do, and be all the better for it, as Christians themselves are—and be at the same time an eminent and shining example of that which Christ lived and taught, and was and is. If so, he is acceptable to God and is a Christian, for however you may classify a man theologically and sectologically, he is a Christian to the extent he lives a life of helpfulness and

love, and a heathen to the extent he violates this law of eternal life. Let us never forget that in our zeal for theology we are liable to crucify religion, thinking we are doing God service; that this has been the sin of theology ever since the world began: for with the sacred and holy name of religion upon its lips it crucified Christ, and drove its murderous dagger to the hilt in the heart of religion!

“He that loveth is born of God and knoweth God.” God accepts a man because of this and so do truly religious minds, while sectarians accept or reject a man because of a certain set of opinions about God, which are accepted to-day only to be rejected to-morrow. Long ago did the Master tell us, that it is not those who say Lord! Lord! who are accepted: but those who do the will of My Father.

If, however, rejecting Christian theology is to reject Christ, and the life of love He illustrated and lived, no such man is saved, Jew or Gentile, for Christ is salvation! If, on the other hand, a man lives a life of love and sacrifice, Christ is in that man; for he can no more live that life apart from Christ, than he can breathe apart from air.

Every well instructed Christian knows this, and possesses his soul in patience; knowing that Christ is that “light which lighteth

every man coming into the world," the only light of reason and source of love in the universe, the only and eternal Son of God, incarnated first in all His fulness in the man Jesus, and then in all who love Him. Whether one is conscious of all this, and can correctly formulate it, is another thing. The blood circulated just as freely before it was discovered by Harvey as afterwards.

But it is our duty to bring the eternal truth, incarnated in Christ Jesus, home to the consciousness and conscience of every person in the world. To preach as St. Paul preached : "Brethren I would not that ye should be ignorant how that our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink, for they all drank of the spiritual rock that followed them, and that *rock* was Christ."

It is a blessed thing to know that the religion of all men is the same, however much their theologies may differ ; that religion is so simple that no one can possibly misunderstand it ; that those "who love mercy, and walk humbly with their God, are the saved souls."

VI. HELPFUL AND HARMFUL THEOLOGY.

We can now confidently summarize that in

which the combined world is a unit in believing, "everywhere, always, and by all."

We all agree that religion is love of God and man. All theologies are an attempt, on our part, to form as clear a conception of God and His relation to us as possible; and we may state this as being an axiom—theology may be a *help* or a *hindrance* to us. It is a help, if it kindles in our hearts a flame of love towards God and man. But, on the one hand, our love towards our fellow-men is in such a rudimentary state; the pride in our ignorant infallibility is so convincing, and the worship of our individual theology so strong, that the temptation will be sure to come sooner or later, to hang or burn one who dares differ with us—and we will not hesitate, thinking that we are saving their souls, and doing God service. On the other hand, our imperfect theology will so picture God, that the time will come in our spiritual development, when we will have to stop loving God, or give up our theology; because our theology presents God to us in such wise that we can neither believe in Him nor love Him. When this time comes, the thing to do is to let our theology go to the four winds, and cling all the tighter to religion—which is love of God and man! Infallibly knowing that anything

which tempts us to injure in word or deed our fellows is born of ignorance, pride, prejudice, sin!

A theology which may not be harmful but helpful in one stage of development, may at a later stage be more harmful and deadly than hemlock. We can take this as our infallible guide: whenever the theology, in which we have been educated begins to cramp and contradict our love of God and man, it has done its work, and it is time for us to get a better theology. God is showing us new and better things.

VII. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Religion is not dead: but is alive and growing, as all this present day funeral wailing over the death of outgrown and discredited theology proves. It is the inevitable birth-pangs of the age into a higher spiritual life, and therefore into a truer conception of Christ. People are trying to put the new wine into old bottles and they are bursting.

Religion has grown in the hearts of men, until they see that nothing is religion except love of God and man; that conduct is of as much importance as creed; righteousness as theology: and that all creeds will receive their final acceptance or rejection solely by

the *kind* of lives they necessarily produce. Creed and theology, church and sacrament, will always be as long as religion is in the world; but the time has come, when religion will sweep away all theologies that stifle the divine instincts of the human heart, and does not teach us to worship a God more merciful than we are.

And when I find such a soul as this, I stretch my hand across all ages, climes and races, and clasp his hand in mine, in the fellowship of the one common Father of us all, before whose throne alike we bow: for I have found a brother in Christ, the common head of the common race; and, "of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with God:" and him whom God accepts let no man dare reject!

The Catholic Church accepts all who love the Lord God with all their hearts, minds, and souls, and their neighbor as themselves, regardless of any theological system not destructive of the revelation of God, given us in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Catholic Church accepts all whom Christ accepts, and is tolerant of all systems of theology—Anglican, Roman, Calvinistic, or

Arminian—for it knows that they will all perish by being outgrown. The theology of Augustine, Luther, Calvin, and Cranmer—even the theology of St. Paul will be transcended, as he himself has told us long ago in these words: “Prophecies shall be outgrown, tongues shall cease, and knowledge shall vanish away; for we know in part and prophesy in part; but, when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.”

But there ever abideth the eternal facts of religion, which is the kinship of God and man; and the hope, faith, and love, which grow out of this kinship—but the greatest of these is love, because it is religion!

II

THE TRUTH IN RELIGION

II

THE TRUTH IN RELIGION¹

Christ the one only religion—What is it for Christianity to be true?—The realities involved—The manner in which Christ lays hold upon us—Religion becomes life.

I. CHRIST THE ONE ONLY RELIGION.

I HAVE said there is only one religion. And at this point it becomes necessary to take stock of ourselves, and try to give a satisfactory answer to the question—why do we believe that Christianity is the one only religion that has ever been in the world? This question, perhaps, can best be answered by asking a few more questions.

What has caused the wide spread usefulness of Christianity in the world? Why has it so deeply and fully satisfied the needs of man? Why has it so often been able to satisfy skepticism and establish faith? What has kept the people and the doctrine in the world till now? Wherein lies the present strength of

¹ After W. N. Clarke in "*What Shall We Think of Christianity*," Charles Scribner's Sons, N. Y.

Christianity? In a word, whence comes Christian power?

The answer is because Christianity is true, and the truth not only of to-day and yesterday, but is of the ancient of days—the truth of God in man since the foundation of the world. If religion had begun with Jesus some two thousand years ago, it could not be religion; for religion must be since man began.

As a matter of fact, the Man Jesus does not claim to be the founder of a new religion, or of religion of any kind. That would be to prove Christianity false, vitiate it in its essence, and discredit its claim to be the one and only religion of mankind. On the other hand, the claim of Jesus is that religion did not *begin* with Him, but *ended* with Him by coming to *perfection*. “I am come not to destroy but to fulfil all things.” Because the incarnation of God in Jesus is the truth men have always been seeking and worshipping, whether they knew Him or not, and when they have found Him, He satisfies them—this is why Christianity is the one only religion there has been in the world. “Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, if ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

If Christianity were something entirely new, introduced for the first time some two thousand years ago, both Jew and Gentile would at once have asked the question—why is the one only true religion introduced at so late a day into the world? Neither Christ, nor the Apostles, nor the intelligent Christian make the absurd claim, that Christianity is *ab initio* two thousand years ago; but the claim of Christ is: “I am the perfection of that religion which has been among men since the foundation of the world, and I am the incarnation of that one true God men have always worshipped: and I am in you and you in me.” And if Christianity had not been able to substantiate this claim, it never would have won a follower from the ranks of Jew or Gentile.

When St. Thomas touched the prints of the nails in the side of the risen Christ, and confessed—“My Lord and my God!” he did not abandon the religion learned at the knee of his pious Jewish mother; but, for the first time, had the perfection of its prophesied fulfilment. I have been taught to worship God—pure, holy, kind, loving, merciful, forgiving, sinless—but unseen; but now He is seen—in the Man Jesus I see all that I have been taught to adore, love, and worship; I now

touch my Lord God Jehovah incarnate ! “ that which was from the beginning, and that which we have heard of the Word of Life, we have seen with our eyes, we have looked upon, and our hands have handled ! ”

The Greeks had been worshipping a God of beauty, but when they saw in Christ the incarnation of that beauty they had imagined to be only in the dark blue heavens, they too said, “ My Lord and my God ! ” The Romans had been worshipping a God of power, but when they saw in Christ the incarnation of more than Cæsar’s power, they said, “ My Lord and my God ! ” Through untold ages, the Wise men of the East had been on the holy quest of the Wisdom God, but when they saw in Christ the incarnation of that Wisdom they had in many a midnight vigil sought in vain beneath the eastern stars, they laid their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, at His feet and said, “ My Lord and my God ! ” Finally, St. Paul summed it all up in these words : “ Christ is the wisdom, knowledge, and power of God ”—the Knowledge the Jew has sought, the Wisdom the Greek has adored, and the Power the Roman has worshipped—and so won Jew, Greek, Roman, and Barbarian of the ancient Roman world, over to the faith that Christ is the one

only eternal religion in the universe : because they saw perfected in Christ the only religion they had ever believed in, and the incarnation of the only God they had ever worshipped, whether that God was called Jehovah, Zeus, or Jove.

My answer therefore is, that Christ is the one only true world-old religion, gathering up in Himself in one dazzling blaze of perfect light, all the refracted rays of light that has ever shone in the hearts of men.

II. WHAT IS IT FOR CHRISTIANITY TO BE TRUE?

My answer is that the source of the power of Christianity is contained in its truth ; and that we will never know anything truer, because there is no higher truth in the universe. This is the most natural explanation which can be given of that victorious power, which first appeared in mankind coming to self-conscious spiritual birth in the knowledge of good and evil, has successfully fought its enemies ever since, and remains upon the field to-day stronger than ever. The answer certainly is very short, and I am unwilling to leave it thus unexpanded. We may not all mean the same thing when we say that Christianity is true. There are so many definitions of Christianity

implied in the thoughts of different persons, the reality is surrounded by so many additions and non-essentials, that when we say Christianity is "true" we may differ widely without knowing it or intending it. When any one affirms that Christianity is true he means, or ought to mean, that what it represents as real is real; that in the realm of the soul things are as it declares them to be; that its affirmations accord with the fact of things since the foundation of the universe, and its experiences are experiences of reality.

The inmost life of Christianity is not in the intellectual statements of its creed, but in the realities and experiences of which the creed is the formal statement; the realities and experiences always transcend the powers of the most highly gifted to express in terms of the intellect; a residuum of mysticism always remains which language can never express.

What is the truth, or what are the realities involved? This is after all the question. I shall answer the question by reaffirming some of the eternal elements of religion as lived in the experience of mankind.

III. THE REALITIES INVOLVED.

1. *God is the Supremely Good Being Jesus Declared Him to Be.*—He really is the Father

of us men—my Father and your Father ; my God and your God. We do not have to do anything nor can we do anything to make ourselves children of our heavenly Father. It is always the father who begets the child ; sonship is always the gift—the free gift—of fatherhood. It is also a fact and reality, that when we come to years of discretion, we become either obedient or disobedient children of God. We can if we choose grow in wisdom, stature, and in favor with God and man, or the reverse ; but—as to making our sonship, that is above and beyond us. If we cannot add one cubit to our stature, or make one hair white or black, the stupendous miracle of self-creation is nonsense. The only way we can make our own sonship is by “growing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”

Let us stop trying to make ourselves what we already are—children of God ; and let us expend our energies in living and growing worthily in that sonship in which we are already created. This fact and reality is the essence of religion and is the substance of the world-old experience of man, as your own poets have said—“we are the offspring of God ;” that God is the Father of us men, before whom earthly fatherhood pales into insignificance.

nificance ; and that our right and normal relation is children of God living at home with Him in eternal goodness. When we live as we ought and can, we will find ourselves living as sons in loyal family fellowship with the best Being the heart of man can conceive. This is the kind of God there is and there can be none other who is the true and real existence of us men. The world is the world of such a God, holy and gracious, sin-hating and fatherly ; and into the world of such a God, and into life with such a meaning, we are all born. It is the duty and gracious privilege of every one of us to be living at home with the absolutely good and holy God in filial fellowship ; and the better we become acquainted with our God, the more thoroughly shall we know Him as the perfect and glorious one, in whom all our being finds full rest and satisfaction.

2. *Jesus Christ is Really the Gift of God to us Men for Our Salvation.*—He really is for us the way, the truth, and the life. He finds us astray in moral evil and brings us home. We were forfeiting in sin our life in eternal goodness in God. He came to save us out of and from our sin ; and He does bring us out of our sinful life into eternal life in God. In what He has done for us in His life and death there is genuine reality, rich in blessing for us

and for all men. The way of the cross is the way of life, for only by losing our lives in the service of others can we ever find our lives—the only way to get is to give.

3. *God is Not Wholly Outside of Us Addressing us from Beyond Ourselves.*—We have not told the whole truth when we have said, that in the man Christ Jesus God comes to us and seeks us for our good. It is true that God as our Father is beyond us in the spiritual heavens, always transcendent, greater than we can grasp and comprehend; it is true that God comes to us as the eternal Son incarnate in the man Jesus; but it is also true that the living God lives in us as the Holy Spirit. He is God always within all men, speaking in the still small voice. In all ages and in all men He convinces and convicts us of sin by actual inward influence. He really renews our hearts, working character such as He desires to see in us. He truly communes with us in the secret places of the soul, teaching truth by inward suggestions; coming as near to us as we are to ourselves, so that we and all men possess Him as an actual indwelling companion.

4. *The Only Right Inspiration in Life and Guide of Conduct in All Things is What Jesus Taught and Illustrated in His Life—*

Love.—The life of sonship towards God is thereby a life of brotherhood towards man. When we live according to love towards our fellows, we do the thing we ought to do, and make of life the thing it ought to be. When usefulness and highest helpful affection form our law of living, we have struck the chords of eternal harmony—and all that is dissonant with love is discord to eternal harmony. This is the spiritual practical reality in this world, and in any other world there may be for human beings. No finer harmony and no sweeter song will ever sound in the halls of the many mansions in our Father's house. This is the thing that is. Here is the clue to the significance of our life, here is the keynote of our destiny, and here is the true method of all our doing : and life is a miserable failure to the extent it is not love.

5. *There is for all of us Corresponding to These Realities a Genuine Transforming Power.*—We are not talking theories or supposing cases ; we are not discussing the God that is to be approved and desired but cannot be attained. For here dwells the power of God incarnate in His church for our present salvation ; Christ is that one only spiritual rock of all the ages in all men, through whom the Holy Spirit actually does His work. He

actually does change the liar into the truthful man and the thief into the honest man. Transformation is an actual experience. Character does become changed when these organized forces of God in His church have their way in our souls. Sin is conquered, holiness is possible, and effective power to do good in a needy world can be had. We can be brought home in holy and happy fellowship with God, and live in helpful love among men. This has been done all through the past and is being done to-day.

6. *These are the Facts in our Case and in the Case of All Men.*—This is the thing that is; this is what existence means; and when we put reality to the test of sincere experiment we shall always find these things true, verifiable, and actually verified in experience. Let our individual understanding of these realities be adequate or inadequate, that makes no difference in the facts. Though we had no understanding of them at all, this is the kind of a world into which we have been born, and this is what existence means. Though we should disagree about them, and grow so blind in heart as to forget our brotherhood, and count one another as aliens because of our disagreement, still these are the realities now and forever. God our Father is the holy

Being with whom we ought to dwell in filial love and obedience; God incarnate in Christ Jesus is the eternal Holy One who through all ages seeks and brings us thither; God the Holy Spirit is the indwelling God who gives us the power to live this life of righteousness; love is the law of life; and the holy victory may be ours.

This is what is meant when it is said that Christianity is true; that it sets forth the things of the soul as they are; so that to experience the thing Christianity proposes is to find eternal foundations. This is why Christianity, presented in its spiritual simplicity, has always appealed successfully to the best there is in man. It is adapted to man's soul and man to it, being that "light which lighteth every man coming into the world." Tertullian told in the early centuries of the "human soul which is naturally Christian;" by which he meant that in the constitution and destiny of the human soul and the religion we have in Christ, there is a natural affinity and adaptation.

He was right. In the fulness of Christ our souls breathe the radiant native airs of innocence in which we are all born in the Garden of Eden, and meet the experience for which we were made. Consequently it is the lower

elements in the soul of man that draw away from Christ, while the worthier elements are responsive to the touch of His Spirit. Christ calls for the best and worthiest there is in man, and the response that the best there is man makes to the wooing of his spirit, is indeed the highest evidence that his voice is the voice of eternal truth. Man need not go outside himself to know whether the Christian religion is true and the Bible inspired. If the soul of man, as he listens to Christ who spake as never man spake, is not persuaded that He is the way and the life, no power on earth or in heaven can do it. If our souls are not lifted upon mountains of inspiration by the compelling voice of Psalm and by the lofty utterance of prophet, may God have pity on our souls!

IV. THE MANNER IN WHICH CHRIST LAYS HOLD UPON US.

The "truth" in Christ is the explanation and fulness of the age-long power of religion. Yet, in anything like a satisfactory account of this power at work in the world, one other thing is to be noted—its manner of laying hold of men. Even truth is not powerful. Even truth assented to, even truth believed in, may fail. We must take into account the mighty element of feeling—*emotion*. It is

when realities are felt to be realities that they become powerful in the life of mankind. In the moral and religious realm the impulse of feeling is needed if truth is to go forth to victory.

We are constantly assuming that truth is to be influential chiefly through the intellect, forgetting that the heart has forgotten more than the head has ever known. No truth until it reaches and stirs the furnace fires of the heart, and leaps up in us as living flames of life, can be effective and powerful. We draw up our "confessions of faith" and declare, that this now clearly stated and wonderful monument of dialectical skill is what we hold, and we are very often sorely disappointed. Creeds only become powerful as they become living experience of people. Not until truth awakens love does it go forth in the world as power. Until God becomes self-conscious living life in us we remain barren.

If the outcome of the life of Jesus had been ever so clear and true a set of propositions, written out and preserved in a book solely as the monument of the dead past, there would have been no Christianity; only a teaching, a philosophy, that had its little day and ceased to be. But Christianity is not a worn-out book religion; it is a living religion of which

the book is a witness; of that newer and diviner fulness of life men began to live now some two thousand years ago, and are still living to-day. Men still go to that old inspired book, and find there recorded their hopes, their fears, and their highest ideals, which will live forever. The same eternal and ever living God, who inspired holy men of old, inspires men to-day; the same hunger for God in human hearts lives everlastingly. So there is more in Christ than His teaching, and His words, wonderful as they are.

There is over and above His wonderful words, His wonderful life of love; His wonderful death of sacrifice; and His most wonderful resurrection into glory, which He holds up to us as our hope, and assures us is our end to be attained. That He is the great High Priest of every living life, without beginning or ending of days, is the secret of His power which stirred and stirs the human heart to its profoundest depths, unlocks every emotion, and awakens infinite love. All the forces of heaven and hell met in the Crucifixion and fought there the battle to the finish. When they laid Him away in the grave, sin, death and hell never seemed more triumphant. If He had remained locked up in that tomb, never more in this world would a righteous

man have dared to lift his voice for the right, the pure, and the good. It would have been the vindication of the powers of hell, for never more will a stronger tread the earth than the sinless one. If He could not break and triumph over the powers of sin, then sin is omnipotent and reigns upon the throne of the highest: but when he rose from the dead, Satan fell and death lost its terrors for man; His ascension resurrected in men the faith that righteousness rules triumphant in the world, though the earth be ever so unquiet; with Him died the reign of the law of the flesh; with Him rose the reign of the law of the Spirit—life triumphant over death, and spirit the Conqueror of matter.

V. RELIGION BECOMES LIFE.

So the first reality to enter into the realm of feeling and emotion was the Saviourhood of Christ. It now came to pass that the disciples grasped the truth of all the ages in what they had seen and heard in Christ, who had unlocked every emotion in their being and created a new Spirit in them. In the realm of their love it was now made plain to them, that for *their* sake He had lived and died and rose again, and was triumphant in God's glory. They felt that they had a Saviour from their

sin and loss, who had filled them with the new life, which was life eternal. Christ had brought them home to God.

And what was God to them in this day of their new awakened life? God was not to them merely an article of faith in their Creed, or a revelation contained in the Bible, but the reality in their own life, out of which the Creed grows everlastingly. God was the reality who had redeemed them from sin and fear and low-living and mortality itself; and the power of this reality was overshadowing them, and making all things new. They felt themselves at home with God—forgiven—accepted—His children! God was not merely above them, or with them, but *in* them. Their belief in the Holy Spirit was their sense of the inwardness of this divine gift—their sense of God within.

It was their sense that God had come nearer than to be among them as the man Jesus, but had crossed the door of their being and was inhabiting them. This divine life of God, through Christ by the Holy Spirit, had been so poured around, above, and within them, that love constituted the very atmosphere of their lives. So love in the fine forms of fellowship, kindness, mutual helpfulness, and missionary zeal, became the life daily

lived among Christians. For the first time in the history of the world a society came into existence whose members actually loved one another. In the midst of the fine frenzy of the ages, the Kingdom of Heaven had come with power on the earth!

By virtue of this incarnation of God in man, all lower life was inconceivably enhanced in potential significance and value, and men now felt that great things were possible. The day of power had come! "And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, the breaking of bread, and the prayers." Christians then as now, cast themselves upon these realities, find them solid, and feel them true. In the profundity of the reality we have in Christ Jesus, the power of the Most High overshadows us, and we become one with God. Religion now passes into virtue, and is livingly believed in. We walk in the blessed footsteps of Christ, never believing it is impossible. The day of power *has* come! For religion has become life!

I have described that which has given power to religion in all ages. Where do you find your powerful men—your Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, St. Paul, Augustine, Luther, Wesley, Edwards, Phillips Brooks? Where are your reformers, leaders? They are men of feeling

in whom *realities* live! They need not be emotional men, and they are not in the popular sense of that word, but they are men of feeling in the nobler sense; men to whom spiritual realities are living things, felt in all their greatness, loved in all their power, and known in all their importance.

When have been the ages of power? Only when the sense of God comes in, thought is warmed to vigor, and faith becomes a passion. Who are the weaker men, and when have come the times of feebleness? The weaker men, for the aggressive purposes of God, are the men who, whatever they may think, do not feel: and the feebler periods are those in which the pulses run low, and the great realities find but a dull response in the affections and emotions of mankind. When the reality we have in Christ is profoundly felt, it moves the world. In the profundity of the reality of religion, it is the normal and worthy thing for the soul to feel with the keenest intensity the seriousness, the preciousness, and the glory, of that which is so real in the incarnation of God in humanity.

And this fulness of life arising within us introduces us to ourselves, and makes us feel at home with God in His and our universe. It tells us what we need, offers us what we must

have, leads us to our right and normal place in God, shows us the right way to live our daily life, gives us the true conception of the world we live in, inspires us with the motive that is right forever, and gives us the actual possession of that God, which mankind has now theorized about and now agonized over since human life began.

III

SOURCE OF AUTHORITY IN RELIGION

III

SOURCE OF AUTHORITY IN RELIGION¹

Foundation of religion—The Creed of Christendom grows out of the experience of mankind—Four questions men want answered—Christ the answer to all questions—Refuses to build religion on Church or Bible but uses them as witnesses—St. Peter's confession of faith—Religion, Church, and Bible.

I. FOUNDATION OF RELIGION.

IN the days of Cæsar Augustus there was born in Judea a child whom His mother called Jesus. After He had grown to manhood His wonderful words, His wonderful deeds, and His wonderful life of love, bound to Him by strong ties of affection a band of disciples of pure and spiritual souls. He did not tell His disciples who He was. He let His wonderful life do that. His wonderful words of truth, His miraculous works of mercy, stirred that land as it had never been stirred before. One

¹ After Row's "*Reasons for Believing Christianity*," Thomas Whittaker, N. Y. and article by Dr. S. D. McConnell in *The Outlook*.

day when He "came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, whom do men say I, the son of man, am? And they said, some say that Thou art John the Baptist; some say Elias; and others say Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, but whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, blessed art thou, Simon Bar Jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in Heaven. . . . Upon this rock will I build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

And upon that rock has the Church of God always been builded: upon the power of men to say, as St. Peter first said, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God." Everywhere the simple story of His life has been told by lips of flesh and blood, or printed upon the page in cold type, men have confessed, "Thou art the Christ, Son of the living God, and our Father which is in Heaven has revealed Him unto us," as He did unto St. Peter.

As a matter of fact, the simple story of Him has been handed on from generation to generation by word of mouth, by a succession of dis-

ciples begotten of Him, continuously through those who believed in Him from the beginning.

Others wrote an account of Him which became fixed in the four immortal Gospels, which will live forever as the high water mark of that inspiration with which God hath inspired men. Men will not let the knowledge of Christ and His life perish, unless they sink to the level of brutes.

When men hear His words to-day, as they did 1900 years ago, they say, "Thou hast the words of eternal Life!" The more we know of His marvelous deeds of love, His wonderful death of sacrifice, and His most wonderful Resurrection into Glory, millions say what Simon Peter first said, "Thou art the Son of the living God." Not because an infallible Simon Peter said it; not because it is written in an Infallible Book; but because the living God reveals it unto us! As long as the Christ of history has the power to seize hold of men's hearts and make them confess with their mouths and lives—"Thou art the Christ the son of the living God"—so long will His Church last. This is the rock upon which it is founded!

Men will never cease to believe in Christ, for He has never deceived them. Men will

never repent living the Christian life, because it always satisfies them. The only cause of repentance we men will have is that we have not followed more closely in His footsteps. We have faith in Christ because He satisfies the hunger of our souls. For with Him great light springs up and life is radiant with the Glory of God, and without Him we sit and wring our nerveless hands in the gloom and darkness of the shadow of death.

II. THE CREED OF CHRISTENDOM GROWS OUT OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

So Christ, in the beginning and unto the end of time, draws His disciples to Himself by His marvelous personality, and the high, helpful, and inspiring truth He offers to men. Virtue and life go forth from Him to them who will receive it. His "follow Me" is powerful, and His instruction is enlightening, uplifting, and transforming. His time for work among us in the flesh as the man Jesus was very short, and only the beginning was possible during His brief life upon the earth. Yet He left behind Him in the world a group of men and women, spiritually changed by the touch of His personality, and instructed in the fundamental principles of all truth and life.

Thus Christ is the Creator of the Christian

people, by reproducing and begetting Himself in every individual disciple. As the driving wheel is the embodied power of the engine, so Christ through the Holy Spirit is the incarnate personal power and life of God, awakening, reproving, consoling, spiritualizing, opening heaven over earth for mankind, in all ages, in all climes, and in all races—for He is in all.

So Christ made and makes the Christian people, and through the experience we undergo in being made Christians, the Universal Creed of Christendom is born, ever new and ever old as it is rewon and reproduced in the individual and in the world—everlastingly. First, Christian life; then the record of that experience perpetually reproduced and witnessed in us—the Apostles' Creed.

The creed, we ought to remember, is not abstract intellectual truth like mathematics, but the highest truth and life the Church knows in experience, by living it. So Christ becomes the vital possession of the Christian people by becoming their life—"I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."

The New Testament contains the record of this spiritual experience, through which the first Christian people passed, and is reproduced in all men of holy and humble heart, unto the end of time. So, whether the New Testament

is true or false, inspired or not inspired, no one is competent to say until he is inspired to live the Christian life. For the final and absolute test of the inspiration of the Christian Scriptures is that innumerable host of people it has led to live inspired lives. There is no surer test that fire burns than that it burns us. As Samuel Taylor Coleridge said long ago: "The Bible is inspired because it inspires me."

Nothing but the immense reality, vitality, and truth, through which Jesus and His disciples passed, could have brought forth the Christian Creed as a living self-conscious life. We greatly misjudge if we think that the Christian faith, as formulated in the Creed of Christendom, is the cool adaption of a set of opinions spun out of the intellect, as a philosophic speculative doctrine. It is the record of the glowing realization of a world of spiritual verities first lived. Then an effort on the part of the mind to tell the deepest experiences the human heart has ever felt, and the formal expression of the profoundest mysteries the human spirit has ever known, lived, and loved.

Before Christians said in the Creed—"I believe in the forgiveness of sins"—their sins had been forgiven! Peters, Pauls, and Magdalenes, were telling of that "peace which

passeth all understanding," which they had experienced in passing from the bondage of sin into the liberty of the children of God. And herein is the secret of the tremendous power of the Creed of Christendom—because it is the living experience of Christian people. So a Christian people came into existence, created and begotten of the ever living Christ, and then into history with their personal experience formulated as the Apostles' Creed, which will live forever, because among other things it is the only satisfying answer to:

III. FOUR QUESTIONS MEN WANT ANSWERED.

1. To know whence we came and what our relation is to the Author of the universe.
2. To obtain relief from guilt under which our conscience labors.
3. To have before us a perfect ideal of moral rectitude.
4. To obtain definite assurance of the destiny that awaits us beyond the grave.

First, men intensely desire to understand the relation which exists between them and the Author of the universe. It is needless for me to tell you that, as a matter of fact, men had very imperfectly succeeded in solving this question for themselves, until Christ solved it for them. This is testified to by the universal

voice of history. Christ tells us that there is a sovereign creator of all things to whom man stands in the relation, not only of a creature but as a child. When He stood beneath the clear Judean skies and so calmly announced, "Call no man upon earth your Father, for one is your Father in heaven," He lifted the world off its hinges ; reversed and forever changed all man's previous thinking about God. It is so radical and far reaching in its results that we have not yet grasped it in all the fulness of its meaning. When He told us that God is a personal moral being, the controller of Providence, holy, just, beneficent, unalterably good, and the merciful Father of us His children, the ancient ages ended, and the New World and the New Heavens began with Anno Domini One!

Contrast the merciful God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, with the God of other theologies which have dominated men, and the difference is simply prodigious. The God of the Philosopher was a being who satisfied not one of the aspirations of the human spirit. He was for the most part an impersonal God, incapable of evoking trust, love or prayer. The gods of Greece and Rome were tainted with the worst imperfections of human nature. But the spirit of God continually bears wit-

ness with our spirits that He, the merciful Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, is the only true God and Father of men. He is what Christ is; and if He is not in Christ, He is not in the universe at all. And if He is not in you and me He is not in the universe at all, "for the head"—the fountain of life in every man—"is Christ, and the head of Christ is God," says the profoundly inspired and philosophic St. Paul.

This is the first thing which the Church of God considers of supreme importance for our salvation, and bends all her energies to help us believe—for each individual to personally and infallibly know for himself that God is our Father Almighty, who is in us and we in Him, individually and collectively—so that He is both *my* Father and *our* Father. In this matter she believes that each man can be an infallible Pope and Book in himself. And when one makes this confession, she does not ask him to tell her why; because she believes with the Lord Jesus Christ, that "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but thy Father which is in heaven." She believes that the only true and eternal basis of religion is God in the souls of men. Here is the first reason why she wishes men to believe in "all the articles contained in the Apostles' Creed."

The next great fact in our experience is that our conscience labors under the sense of guilt, and earnestly desires freedom from its burden. Of this fact the universal prevalence of sacrifice in some form or other is sufficient proof. No race of men, who have believed in the being of God, have been without some means of expiating guilt.

And not only is this so, but the holiest and the best of men have always felt deeply conscious that they have not lived up to that law which conscience pronounces right; and the deeper has been the sense of this in proportion to their holiness. If there has been one cry which voices the universal experience of the heart of man it is, I am not able to reconcile myself to myself or to my God, and never will be able to do so. There is a great gulf between what I am, and what I ought to be, and long to be. I cannot lift myself up, some power from on high must come down and lift me up.

Men had struggled all through the ages to lift themselves and failed; they had tried to cleanse their souls of the stains of their sins by sacrifices and failed. At last they sat down in the great darkness of the shadow of death in despair, and cried out to God for help. God answered that cry of His children and

came down in Jesus Christ and united heaven and earth. And the infinite Father to-day, in answer to the sincere cry of repentance from His sinful children, by His Holy Spirit, through His only begotten Son, incarnates Himself in our hearts and lives, removing from us the burden of the awful sense of guilt and the consequence of sin, by recreating and resurrecting what we have lost and destroyed—by filling us with the fulness of the stature of Christ Jesus.

Wherever the knowledge of Christ has gone and He has been believed in, the old world-wide institution of sacrifices has been abolished. It has subverted them because God has revealed to us men His children, that the only acceptable way to approach Him is through the perfect man Christ Jesus. Before Him all expiations and sacrificial rites of the ancient world have perished: because He has lifted the burden of the guilt of sin, and the consequences of sin off men's consciences, by His teaching that the only thing that we can do to satisfy God is to repent us of our sins, and that God has the power and will undo the havoc we have made in ourselves and in others.

To make more plain what I have just said, I will not take the extreme case of Lady Mac-

beth, with her hands and heart so steeped in murder that "to cleanse them would incarnadine the sea." I will not take that extreme case and ask: what must she do to free her soul from the guilt of sin, and the world from the consequences of her sins? But I will relate an occurrence which I witnessed not long ago.

A mother left her baby in the care of her little son, who was rolling it on the piazza, which sloped towards the steps. The boy became careless, ran back into the hall for a moment, turned and saw the carriage on the verge of the steps. He ran as fast as he possibly could, but not in time to save the carriage from overturning, and throwing the baby out on the brick pavement. The child was picked up with a gash cut in its forehead. The boy thought he had killed his little sister and was unconsolable with grief. Fortunately the child was not seriously hurt, and soon recovered. But suppose the child had thus been accidentally killed?

It would have taken more than repentance to satisfy that boy. His repentance would make him more careful in the future, and perhaps prevent him from ever doing so again. But his repentance would not bring his dead sister back, and undo the consequence of his careless-

ness. Nothing would or could satisfy that boy save giving back to that child its life which had been taken. And because God has given us the assurance through Christ, that He has the power and will restore the ravage every sin hath made, and give back in a much higher resurrected form every life whose blood sin hath shed, there has been lifted off our conscience the awful burden of sin, which has bowed our souls into the dust of the earth.

If she will repent, here is the power which can make clean Lady Macbeth's blood-stained hands which would "incarnadine the sea," and lift off her guilty soul the burden of the consequence of sins. The power of God to restore and make restitution of all things that her sin has destroyed in herself and in others!

So the resurrection of Christ returns answer to the question what is our destiny beyond the grave? The question, whether we shall perish by the stroke of death, or if not, whether our condition hereafter will be affected by our conduct here, is a question we will always put to ourselves with the profoundest interest. Struggling with the uncertainties and the unsatisfying character of present things, we cannot help asking the question: Do my hopes and fears terminate with this shadow of existence which we call life?

Christ is the answer to this question. As a matter of historical fact, in Him the universal law of death has been reversed, and He assures us that His resurrection from the dead and His renewed life is the pledge of the resurrection of all mankind. When there falls from the lips of such an one the calm, strong, eternal assurance—"I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me shall never die"—the heart of man will forever leap forward with the glad response: "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God!"

IV. CHRIST THE ANSWER TO ALL QUESTIONS.

Christ is always God's answer to any and every question we may ask. When we ask who God is, Christ replies: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father. I am in the Father and the Father in Me. I am in you and you in Me." When we ask ourselves what perfect man is, Christ replies, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin." When we ask ourselves how we are to be freed from the guilt of sin and the consequence of sin, Christ replies, "I am the propitiation of your sins." When we ask ourselves what is to be our fate beyond the grave, Christ replies: "I am the resurrection and the life." O man, ask me any ques-

tion you please and I am the answer. I am always God's way to man and man's way to God.

These are truths upon which our destiny hinges, and what we need to believe to be saved. And because all these truths are enshrined in the Apostles' Creed, beginning with "I believe in God the Father almighty" and ending in the triumphant shout of "Life everlasting," the Church of God asks the one simple question: "Dost thou believe all the articles in the Apostles' Creed?" Knowing that if Christ be lifted up He will draw all men unto Him, and the Father in heaven will bear witness in our souls and reveal that "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God," planting the Church upon the rock Christ planted it, knowing that "the gates of hell will not prevail against it."

V. REFUSES TO BUILD RELIGION UPON CHURCH OR BIBLE BUT USES THEM AS WITNESSES.

Belief in these great fundamental facts of the faith of Christendom, stated so simply and sublimely in the Apostles' Creed, is all and absolutely all the universal Church of Christ requires one, whether minister or layman, to believe as his Confession of Faith.

"Dost thou believe all the articles contained in the Apostles' Creed?" This is the only question the Church of Christ permits the minister to ask one concerning his faith. She does not permit her ministers to ask a further question—"why do you believe the Apostles' Creed?" The Catholic Church never has and never will ask a person that question. One can believe the Creed for any reason that is satisfactory to himself.

Dost thou renounce the world, the flesh, and the devil? Dost thou believe all the articles contained in the Apostles' Creed? Wilt thou be baptized in this faith? Wilt thou obediently keep God's holy will and commandments? The Church of Christ permits no minister to ask more than these four simple questions and answers as conditions of membership.

The moment any one goes beyond these four questions and answers, so sublimely simple and all inclusive, you plunge at once into the dreary chaos of combative sectarianism, and divide mankind into at least three hostile camps. For there are *three well-known reasons* people give themselves why they believe the Christian Faith. One man says: "I believe the Christian Faith because the Church has taught it from the beginning, down through all the

ages back to Christ and beyond, for it has been taught in essence and substance ever since "men began to call upon the name of the Lord;" as Dr. Nunn says in "The Story of the Landmarks," ever since "the first man conceived a Causeless Cause, when first finite man endeavored to convey to his fellow, an idea of Infinity." So the person says, I believe in Christianity because the Church teaches it. I believe the creed upon the authority of the Church.

I reply: that is a good and solid reason, satisfactory to some of the profoundest minds the world has ever known, and guided an innumerable host of saints over the fiery marl and burning sands of incarnate life into that peace of God which passeth all understanding. But that is your own private affair: the Church of God only cares to know that you *believe* the Creed, not *why* you believe it.

Another man says, I believe the Creed of Christendom, because I believe that from the beginning there were a long line of men whom God, in a special sense and with a difference in kind above and beyond all other men, directly inspired to know Him and His eternal truth; and through them, and them alone, has God made the perfect and final revelation of Himself to mankind. I believe that this per-

fect and final revelation of God is contained in that book we call the Bible. I believe in the Bible first, and then I believe the Creed because it is contained in the Bible. I believe that the Bible is verbally inspired from Genesis to Revelation, every word of it the *ipse dixit* of God, eternal, immutable, infallible !

I reply this is a good reason to build upon ; but again, it is your own private affair. The Church only cares to know that you believe the Faith.

But a third person comes and says : I would believe the Creed of Christendom, if there was no such book as the Bible, and no one else in the world believed it but myself. I do not believe the Creed because a great and venerable Book contains it, nor because a great and venerable Church has taught it from the days of Seth to the present time. I believe the Creed of Christendom because my reason tells me that it is the only rational thing for me to believe. I must believe it unless I commit *rational suicide*.

I know that I did not create myself. I know I did not create the universe. I know, as much as I know anything, that there is a Causeless Cause, who is none other than God. I know, that however *transcending* me, this Causeless Cause is not *less* than I am. I know

that I have intellect, will, love—that is, mind. I know that I am self-conscious life, consisting of sensation, reason, and intuition. I know that I am a cause—a spirit. I know that I am in the image and likeness of this infinite and eternal Causeless Cause of myself and the universe, who is in the universe and in myself, in my image and likeness, however much He is infinitely greater than I am, and however much He differs from me in my present state of development.

To such an one I reply again : If that is a sufficient reason to you why you should believe the fundamentals of the Christian Faith, that is your own private opinion,—and God speed you in getting as many as you can to agree with you. You can believe in the Creed of Christendom because your highest reason based upon spiritual intuition convinces you that it is true, or because you base it upon the authority of the Bible, or because you base it upon the teaching authority of the Church.

The Christian rationalist bases his faith upon intuition, our Roman brethren upon the teaching authority of the Church, our Evangelical brethren upon the authority of the Bible. The Catholic Church, the Universal Church of Christ, says : I don't care three straws why you believe the Apostles' Creed, so long as you

live by it. If you do that you will be saved, and if you don't you will be lost !

Now because people have thought that it was necessary for them to believe the Universal Creed of Christendom for the *same reason* ; and, that people who could not give the same reason for their belief in the Creed, could not work and worship together in the one Church of God, has been a most potent and fruitful cause of ignorant, prejudiced, wasteful, ungodly, and sinful sectarian strife. But, upon careful investigation, I think we will find that these three diverse reasons why people believe the Creed, are not antagonistically and fundamentally different, but are unified in one higher and all-inclusive reason.

VI. ST. PETER'S CONFESSION OF FAITH.

When St. Peter made his confession of faith in Christ, it is most significant, and of the greatest importance for us to remember, that Christ considered it of enough vital importance to the well-being of religion among men to tell St. Peter *why he believed* : and in so doing uncovered for him the cause, source, and foundation of his faith. And I firmly believe that Christ, knowing what was in man, did this not only that St. Peter might know the foundation of his own personal faith in Him,

but that we in these later ages, in the midst of this clamorous confusion of tongues, might have uncovered for us the basal rock of faith in God and in all men and in all ages.

Jesus did not tell St. Peter that the reason why he made his confession of faith was because the prophets ages before had foretold His coming, and given the minutiae of His birth, person, and death. Christ told St. Peter that his faith was not based upon the inspired prophets of the past, however much inspired they were. Christ also told St. Peter that his faith was not based upon the highest living human inspired teaching voice of the age—John the Baptizer, though he had borne testimony to Christ in no uncertain voice.

Christ said: "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but My Father which is in heaven." Peter, be it known unto you, and unto all men henceforth and forever, that your salvation does not depend upon the writing of books however infallible, nor upon the authority which comes from the unanimous voice of bodies of men however inspired; but the highest God in the universe, My Father and your Father, speaks to you personally—heart to heart, mind to mind, spirit to spirit, I over against I, and deep answering unto deep—revealing that I am in you and you in Me,

and that I am your salvation and life hid in God !

Of Me the prophets have spoken, of Me the Apostles will bear witness, because the same Spirit that now speaks in you revealing that I am the Son of the living God, is the same Spirit that spake in the past, and speaks in the present individually and collectively in voice of the redeemed : and you understand that Spirit which spake in the past, and which speaks in the collective voice of the present, because the *same* Spirit speaks in you—"flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven."

By the same Spirit the prophets spake ; by the same Spirit the Christ, son of the living God, was born ; by the same Spirit every Christian is born—"ye must be born of the Holy Spirit, who will guide you into all truth" : so the Spirit is one and the same, speaking in the past, present, and future, individually and collectively in mankind.

Those of us who base our faith on the Bible trust the utterance of the Spirit in the past ; we who base our faith upon the collective voice of the Church trust the utterance of the Spirit in others now living ; but neither you nor I can understand that Spirit which speaks in the Bible and in the Church, until it speaks

in *us*. So in this way, and in this way alone, can we have the witness of the Spirit of Truth individually and collectively in the past, present, and future—always! So that every man hears in the tongue in which he is born the same Spirit uttering the wonderful Word of God. So reason, authority, and scripture, unite their threefold voice in the one voice of the eternal Spirit, unto the glory of God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, our life hid in God. I am never sure that I hear the true voice of the Spirit until I test His utterance in my own personality, by His utterance in the whole body of the faithful in the past and in the present—in other words, the Bible and the Church. Then we are as near infallibility as we can get. The trouble with us who trust the inner light exclusively, is that we do not correct the refraction of His rays in our personality, by His witness in humanity *collectively* in the past and in the present. So I believe we have bridged one of the deepest gulfs that divided Christendom into sectarian societies.

VII. RELIGION, CHURCH, AND THE BIBLE.

At this point we can ask, in the proper spirit and without fear of being misunderstood, what is the relation between Religion, the

Church, and the Bible? Which came first? As a matter of fact they are based upon the same Spirit, as He is able to utter Himself in the past and the present, humanity being what it is now and then; they are all based upon the same Spirit, whose love unites the eternal Father and Son, whose love shed abroad in our hearts is religion. But which came first? Religion, the Bible, or the Church?

Which came first? The United States or the history of the United States? Which came first? The love song, or the love which inspired it? As a matter of fact, first came the inspiration of the Spirit of God in man, binding men together in an organization, in which each individual finds his own and the common life of humanity hid in God. This is the Church of God come to self-consciousness, but as yet neither redeemed nor sanctified. Then this brotherhood went on growing through the ages, and expressed its deepest soul experience and highest spiritual thirst for God in that matchless literature and God inspired Book we call the Bible, which finds its glorious consummation in the at-one-ment of God and man in Christ Jesus our Lord. So the Bible is last and religion is first in the order of time, and the Bible is founded upon the

Church, and the Church upon religion: and all upon the spirit of God speaking in our souls, individually and collectively, in the past and in the present. If this was not so, it would be impossible for either you or me ever to know that the Bible is inspired, and the Church teaches the truth of God.

The historical order of Religion, the Church and the Bible, I believe is as follows. We will go no further back than the time of Abraham, from whose time until Moses we will estimate to be four hundred years—during which time perhaps not a word of the Old Testament was written in Hebrew. Moses is the moulder of the Jewish Theology known as the Mosaic Dispensation. He may have written parts of some of the books in the Old Testament, but these books continued to be written for a thousand years, completed probably about 150 years before Christ.

Neither is the Christian religion founded upon the New Testament. Probably the first book in the New Testament to be written was the epistle of St. James about 50 A. D. Many of the first Christians who had been baptized into the Church lived and died before a single line of the New Testament was written. The last book of the New Testament was written about the year 100 A. D. By this time three gen-

erations of Christians had lived. But it was not until 325 A. D. that the Church collected these writings, decided which were inspired, bound them into the New Testament, and distributed them among the churches.

Do you now understand why it is an historical impossibility for the Christian religion to be founded upon a book, however much that book may contain the history and statement of the facts of religion? And why the Church refuses to require any one to say he believes in the Apostles' Creed because it is in the Bible? Because the Christian faith is older than the Christian Bible. Because the Christian Faith built the Church and wrote the Bible!

The greatest mistake our Evangelical Societies ever made was to teach the people that the sole basis of the Christian religion is the Bible. The Bible is the authoritative textbook of religion, but religion is no more founded upon it than mathematics is upon Sanford's Arithmetic. The mistake of the Roman Communion is that the only basis of religion is an Infallible Church and Pope. The souls of men will never have rest—and ought not to have rest—until they learn that the eternal basis of Religion is on firmer foundation than either the Bible or the Church, whose proper function is to bear witness to the

truth. The basis of the Christian Religion is in the living God, who to-day lives in the souls of men and inspires them; our spirits do bear witness with the Spirit of God that we are the children of God; He does send forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts whereby we cry Abba Father; when we say of Jesus that He is the Christ the Son of the Living God, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto us, but our Father which is in heaven."

The Church, the Bible, and Reason, all have their necessary place and function in the economy of religion. But their function is not properly stated by saying that religion is founded upon any of them. Guides, interpreters, *witnesses* they are! All of them *invaluable* witnesses to the Faith! They all bear witness to the truth of religion. The Church is the living witness of the truth of religion, and the facts upon which it is founded. The Bible is the most authoritative witness we have of the facts which led the first people to become Christians; and also what they believed and did.

I believe the Creed of Christendom the more strongly because it is found in the Bible. I believe it more strongly still, because it has been taught in the Church from the beginning. But I believe it most strongly because the

Spirit of God convinces my spirit that it is the eternal Truth! This is the foundation and supreme authority in religion—the Spirit of God witnessing in our spirits that we are the children of God. Upon this we build confidently, knowing that when the winds arise, and the rains fall, and the waves roar, the house will stand, being built upon the rock!

We have come to a time in the history of the world when nothing but realities will be tolerated. Only those things can be accepted as sacred which awake the sense of reverence. Only those things are inspired which can themselves inspire. There need be no fear to submit the Christian Religion, the Christian People, and the Christian Scriptures to this test. They have won their way into the world, and will continue to win their way in the world, upon their intrinsic power to inspire the world. The Creed, the Church, and the Bible, are “profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness.” They will all live, because God continually bears witness that in them speaks “the still small voice,” at the sound of which every true prophet and man of God removes his dusty sandals from off his feet, covers his face, and bows himself in adoration to the Most High God!

IV
ESSENTIALS OF CHURCH MEMBER-
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IV

ESSENTIALS OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

One hundred and forty-three churches—The Catholic Church—Sectarian societies—Sectarianism a dead and spent force—The four questions and answers—The Catholic Church simple, inclusive, and comprehensive.

I. ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-THREE CHURCHES.

PROFESSOR DRUMMOND in his book "Natural Law in the Spiritual World" in the chapter on "Eternal Life," says: "Many men would be religious if they knew where to begin; many would be more religious if they were sure where it would end. 'Good Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' is still the deepest question of the age. What is religion? What am I to believe? What seek with all my heart, soul, and mind? This is the imperious question we ask ourselves in all earnest hours. Asked with many of us time after time to remain unanswered.

“Still the question pursues us. Theory after theory is rejected. The great books are returned sadly to their shelves, the years pass, and the problem remains unsolved. Every day a new authority announces himself. Poets, philosophers, and preachers try their hand on us in turn. New prophets arise and beseech us for our soul’s sake to give ear to them. Yet the doctrine of yesterday is challenged by a fresh philosophy to-day, and the creed of to-day will fall in turn before the criticism of to-morrow. Increase of knowledge increaseth sorrow. And at length the conflicting theories, like the beams of light in the laboratory experiment, combine in the mind to make total darkness.”

This is the inevitable result of having one hundred and forty-three sectarian societies in the United States, with one hundred and forty-three different creeds and methods of salvation. If it were possible to confuse people and make them lose their heads this would do it. No greater blessing could be bestowed upon this land than for all Christian people to say with one mouth and one voice, **THIS IS SALVATION! BELIEVE THIS AND DO THIS AND YOU WILL BE SAVED!** and then make what one must believe and do to be saved—nothing more and nothing less—the conditions of mem-

bership in the Church of God, the incarnate body of Christ, the blessed company of all faithful people.

II. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

If we take any part in bringing about our salvation, what we must believe and do to be good men and good women, are the essentials of membership in God's Church. What I can believe or not believe, what I can do or leave undone, and be none the better or worse man for so doing and believing, is a non-essential of Church membership. The Church which perfectly represents Christ makes no non-essential a condition of membership in His Church. The conditions of Church membership ought to be the conditions of salvation. To be a real member of the one Church of God is to be in the way of salvation; not to be a member of it is to be on the road to ruin. This is what we mean when we say, I believe in THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.

What all men must believe and do to be saved from a *sinful life* is *the faith* of the Catholic Church. If more than this is made necessary for membership in the Church, that instant the Church becomes a Sectarian Society, because it has added over and above the essentials, non-essentials. It has made it

necessary for a man, in order to become a member of our religious club, to believe and do things which men can believe and do and be the worst men in the world; not believe and not do and be the best men in the world. This is a sectarian society. An heretical society makes its conditions of membership such, that if one were to obey and believe them, he would still be a sinful man. It is a society which leaves out something essentially necessary for one to believe and do to be saved. What a man must believe and do to be saved from a *sinful life* is the faith of the Catholic Church. If a society requires more than this it is sectarian; less than this, it is heretical. That which adds to the faith is sectarian; subtracts the faith, heretical; preserves the faith in its due proportion, is catholic; that which has been believed "always, everywhere and by all"—*the essentials of Christ character-making*.

III. SECTARIAN SOCIETIES.

Fifty years ago we had genuine sectarian societies in this land. Each and every one lorded it over God's heritage, making any and every condition of membership they saw fit—honestly believing and teaching that a man

could not be saved unless a member of our sectarian society.

For this is the only way any Church can originate; by convincing people that they cannot be saved unless they act and believe as we do. The Christian Church never would have been organized, if the people who lived at the time of its organization, had not been convinced that "In the name (the character) of Jesus Christ, and in none other is there salvation." It was only when, and as, and to the extent, that they lost faith in the power of "the shedding and sprinkling of the blood of bulls and goats and heifers" to save them from their sins did they abandon Judaism and believe that Christ was "the way, the truth, and the life;" to whom their prophets pointed, of whom their sacrificial system was typical, and in whom it was fulfilled; that He had "come not to destroy anything but to fulfil all things," did they become Christians.

And so, that which made the origin and perpetuation of the Catholic Christian Church possible, is also the cause of the origin of all Sectarian Christian Societies; namely, that the conditions of membership in his Sectarian Society are absolutely essential to salvation. When, however, that which separates the Sect from all other Christians is acknowledged to

be a non-essential of salvation, its *RAISON D'ETRE* is dead, and continuance in the membership of the Sect by such a person is sinful.

We must constantly remember that only a few Sectarian Christian Societies among us originated in America. Most of them had their origin in Europe, and as their members immigrated to America, they brought their Societies with them and set them up here. The Sectarian Christianity we have in America is largely of foreign importation; and, as these foreign populations have been fused and amalgamated into One American People, the day is coming when the foreign Sectarian Christianity imported into America from Europe will be fused into One American Church.

Fortunately for us, the heat, the bitterness, the strife, and the controversies growing out of the formation of Sectarian Societies we know nothing about, save as we read them upon the pages of history. But in the day of their origin and early growth, as all readers of Church history know only too sadly and too well, the air was filled with the anathemas of excommunication hurled by each and every one against all and every one not of his sect and party, each claiming salvation was to be found only within his walls.

So in "the good old days" there were genuine, giant, uncompromising sectarians. The Baptist, the Methodist, the Presbyterian, and all the rest of us, held and taught that the conditions of membership in *our society* were the absolute conditions of salvation. The Catholic Faith and Church were submerged and in danger of being lost beneath these surging billows of sectarian Christianity. But to-day, thank God, if people only knew it, sectarianism is dead !

IV. SECTARIANISM A DEAD AND SPENT FORCE.

For this sufficient reason, every Sectarian Society knows that membership in his particular Sect is not necessary for salvation ; that a man can get to Heaven without obeying those conditions which make his Sectarian Club different from all others ; that every true Christian will get to Heaven ; that these societies among us are rapidly becoming the keepers of a common Christianity, a common faith, which constitute the *essentials of salvation* ! When one makes that statement he ceases to be a Sectarian and becomes a Catholic Christian. Sectarianism for him is dead !

There are hundreds of thousands and millions of Christians thinking and saying this

to-day. They have ceased to care and bother themselves about the quarrels of Sectarian Societies, and their conflicting Confessions of Faith. But they care infinitely more than they ever did about the essentials of genuine salvation! the Creed which enshrines these essentials! and the Church, which is the embodiment and living organism of this salvation! which is the Catholic Church, the incarnate body of Christ, the blessed company of all faithful people, the temple of the living God! If Christians find such an organism in existence it is the nucleus around which will be formed the American Catholic Church. Because it is that body of Christians which hold and teach the Christianity common in all the societies!

The condition American Christians find themselves in to-day is this—most of them find themselves members of societies which have confessed that they have conditions of membership which are not essential to salvation! This is becoming intolerable and unendurable to men and women who are seeking the reality and the marrow of things. They are asking the question more earnestly every day, “What right has any body of men to form themselves into a society which they call the Church of Christ, and then make con-

ditions of membership in that society which they themselves acknowledge are not essential to salvation?"

What I mean is this. We have in this town five competing Religious Societies. It would take all of us combined, together with our varied and different but complementary activities of work and methods of worship, to make a well equipped church, able to successfully cope with the evils of our time, and the new problems of our changing civilization.

Why can we not do this? One very plain and stubborn reason is because the conditions of membership are not the same in any two of our organizations. Yet we all call ourselves the Church of Christ.

Has Christ five methods of saving a man? Must one man believe and do one thing to be saved, another man believe and do another thing to be saved, so on *ad infinitum*, until there is a particular method of salvation for every individual man? When the thing is put in this way you see the absurdity and sin of it!

Once upon a time we all thought, and called ourselves the Church of Christ in an exclusive sense, but all of us have gotten bravely over that now. I go to my Baptist brother and say: "Do you believe that all the Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Romanists

are going to perdition when they die ? that no man in this town is going to be saved except he is wet all over with water ? ” He will say, “ Oh no ; I believe all Christians are saved and will go to Heaven when they die.”

I ask my Methodist brother if he believes only Methodists are going to be saved ? He says, “ Oh no ; all Christians are saved and will go to Heaven when they die.”

My Presbyterian brethren do not believe that only Presbyterians are going to Heaven, but that all Christians will. They themselves do not believe all the Westminster Confession of Faith. Even the Roman priest does not believe that all the good people in this town are going to everlasting torment.

Here is the condition of sectarian Christianity in America to-day. We all admit that all Christians are good enough to enter Heaven, but not good enough to become members of our societies, until they subscribe to our *peculiar conditions of membership*, which on all hands are confessed non-essentials of salvation ; a man can obey and believe them or not, as he sees fit, and still get to Heaven ! I am stating the simple cool facts about this sect-ridden Christian land of ours.

Once people believed and honestly believed that unless a man was immersed, believed the

Methodist Discipline, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Thirty-nine Articles, or that the Pope was infallible and the Supreme Head of the Church, they could not be saved. As long as people believed this, we could not help having sectarian Christianity; but, to-day, the great majority of Christians know that a man can believe all these non-essentials, about which Christians have wrangled and fought so pugnaciously and so long, and be lost in sin: not believe a one of them and be saved!

Sectarianism to-day is a dead and spent force! These sectarian creeds and organizations were once live realities; but to-day they are corpses and ought to be buried out of sight; so that all Christians can again "unite in the Apostles' fellowship and doctrine, the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42).

V. THE FOUR QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

If you want to know the essence of the Church ask its people what they are required to do and believe to become members of the Church. *Ask the conditions of membership in the Church?* That makes the Church what it is. If the conditions of membership are such as to be no more nor less than what a man must believe and do to be saved here on

earth, in Mars, Jupiter, anywhere in God's universe, where a sinful being called man may be—that is “*The Catholic Church.*”

While the method of worship in the Church is a non-essential, the great and overwhelming majority of Christians think, and perhaps always will think, that the Church ought to have a liturgical form of worship; that her priest and ministers ought to be clothed in garments befitting the dignity and majesty of the worship of Almighty God; her hymns, anthems and Te Deums ought to lift the hearts of worshippers heavenward upon wings of sublime music; the very building ought to be a sermon in stone; she ought to be all glorious within with statuary, painting, altar lights, and ritual worship, so that the moment the worshipper enters the door by the Baptismal Font he knows that he is in the house of his Almighty Father, and falls low upon his knees worshipping Him with his whole heart, mind, soul and body! But these, however good in themselves, are non-essentials; a man can as acceptably worship his Almighty Father in his shirt sleeves in a log hut, upon the bare sands by the sounding waves, upon the mossy bank in the lonely forest. *The essentials of the Catholic Church are the conditions of her membership!*

What must a man do and believe to be a member of the Catholic Church of God? I believe these four questions and answers are the absolute essentials, and absolutely all of them.

1. Dost thou renounce the Devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same and the sinful desires of the flesh, so that thou wilt not follow or be led by them?

Answer.—I renounce them all, and by God's help will endeavor not to follow nor be led by them.

2. Dost thou believe all the articles of the Christian Faith as contained in the Apostles' Creed?

Answer.—I do.

3. Wilt thou be baptized in this faith?

Answer.—That is my desire.

4. Wilt thou then obediently keep God's Holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life?

Answer.—I will, by God's help.

This is what a person must believe and do to become a Catholic Christian. This is what he must believe and do to be saved from a sinful life. This is what he must believe and do to be a Christian at all. Here is Catholic, universal Christianity. That Christianity which

is rapidly becoming common and universal among all Sectarian Christians, which is enabling the most spiritual-minded among us to gladly and joyfully say: It is not necessary for a man to be a member of any sect to be saved! It is only necessary for him to be a Christian.

Let us go over what it takes to make a man a Christian and see if what I have just said is not the truth. It will wonderfully help to draw us all together.

Question 1. Dost thou renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the sinful desires of the flesh, so that thou wilt not follow nor be led by them? This summed up in one word is *repentance*, and is what repentance means. Can a sinful man become a Christian—be saved from his sins unless he repents? Could I become a member of any Christian society without promising to do the things involved in this question?

Questions 2 and 3. Dost thou believe all the articles of the Christian faith as contained in the Apostles' Creed, and wilt thou be baptized in this faith?

The first question demands on the part of the person *Repentance*; the second question

demands *Faith* ; the third question asks for an *Open Avowal* of this Faith. The simplest form in which the Christian faith appears is : "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." The Lord Jesus said : "I am in the Father and the Father in Me. He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father. The Father is greater than I. The Father will send the Spirit and I will send the Spirit. Ye shall be baptized not many days hence with the Holy Spirit." So Christ in His last command summed up what it is to believe in Him, and condensed it into the brief Baptism Formula of the Trinity : "All power is given unto Me in Heaven and Earth : Go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Ghost : teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you : and lo, I am with you always even to the end of the world " (St. Matt. 28 : 18-20).

This forever fixes the Christian faith so that the first Christian knew it as well as the last one will. It is faith in God ; the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This faith can never be added to nor subtracted from, and remain Christian. And baptism into the Christian faith is baptism of men into God, so that we

may and can become "the living temple of the living God, who is above all, through all, and in you all."

The Christian Creed always has and always will be nothing more nor less than belief in God: the Father, what He is and does; the Son, what He is and does; the Holy Ghost, what He is and does.

It will always be: "I believe in God who is the Father, who is Almighty, is Creator of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ who is His only Son our Lord, who is conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into Hell, rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven. I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the dead, and the life everlasting!"

This you see is nothing more nor less than believing in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and what each respectively is and does: greatest possible condensation being, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ (in whom the Godhead dwells bodily) and thou shalt be saved." Can a person become a member of any Denomination without a confession and open avowal of this faith?

Question 4. Wilt thou then obediently keep God's Holy Will and Commandments and walk in the same all the days of thy life? I wish you to notice particularly the answer to this question. How can one say yes, *unqualifiedly* to that question, when he knows he is going to *break* God's Holy Will and Commandments? If the Christian Church required any one to answer that question by a plain yes, I would never ask it.

And yet, how can a man be saved, unless he does keep God's Holy Will and Commandments? Nothing impure and unclean can enter the Kingdom of heaven. But cannot God enter into the impure and cleanse it, making it fit for the Kingdom? Is not this the only way any of us ever were or will be saved—purified by opening our hearts and letting God come into our lives? The only right answer that can be given to this question is: I in myself am not able to keep God's Holy Will and Commandments, and never can nor will be able to save myself! God alone is able to do this great thing; and only as He incarnates Himself in me—only as *His* mind becomes *my* mind, *His* love *my* love, *His* spirit *my* spirit—can I obey His commandments, and *His* Holy Will become *my* will. So the man conscious of his own weakness, but be-

lieving in the Almighty Power of God says: "I will by God's help!"

I know of no words in any language which express such an utter sense of humility, and at the same time and in the same words, such an unbounded assurance of power as these words: "I will by God's help!" This has been the secret source of power in men ever since "the days of Enos the son of Seth when men began to call upon the name of the Lord." The Psalmist says: "By the help of the Lord I will get me the victory over mine enemy." And "by the help of the Lord," kings have ruled wisely upon thrones, statesmen have made righteous laws in Parliaments and Congresses; men and women have lived nobly and grandly in grinding poverty; and patriots have lifted the heel of the tyrant from the neck of the oppressed! "By the help of the Lord" the thief has been made the honest man, the liar the truthful man, the sot the sober man; and "by the help of the Lord" men have conquered their sins and kept God's holy will and commandments!

VI. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, SIMPLE, INCLUSIVE AND COMPREHENSIVE.

Now in conclusion, I beg you to take note of several things. These questions and an-

swers are the only conditions of membership the Universal Christian Church ever has required. They are summed up in three words: Repentance, Faith, and Obedience. Before a sinful man can be saved, he must repent him of his sins, believe in God, and obey His Commandments. To the extent we do this God saves us by incarnating Himself in us as in the man Jesus.

The Catholic Church makes no non-essential a condition of membership; for the sole purpose of the Church, the incarnate body of Christ now in the world, is to do the work Christ did while in the flesh—save us from *sin*. So all her manifold forms of worship and varied kinds of activity are to make us better and more useful men, by making us more Christlike. The Church of Christ pronounces judgment upon no man—sending none either to everlasting torment, or to an eternal heaven; but her humblest member can infallibly say to any one inquiring the way of salvation: “Believe this and do this and thou shalt be saved!”

Beyond these simple questions and answers the Universal Church of Christ has no cut and dried theology. She does not attempt to fetter the thinking of any man, but lets each man make his own theology, or none at all, so

long as he does not attempt to bind it upon another as orthodoxy. I do not believe any two members of the Church of Christ have the same theology, but we all have the same religion! In the one Church of Christ there are Calvinists, Arminians, High Churchmen, Low Churchmen, Broad Churchmen, Ritualists, all sorts and conditions of men. How can we all live together in peace in the one Church of Christ? Because Christ is big enough to comprehend us all, welcomes all, died for all, and is the Saviour of us all—this is the explanation that explains it all. Because all these differences of theology and ritual that divide us are non-essentials: but, when it comes to the essentials, we all hold them with the vice-like grip of steel; believe them with our whole heart, soul and strength; and assert them with all the power of the infallibility of our Lord and Master!

And what is Salvation? Christ is Salvation, the Author of Salvation, and we are saved to the extent we are like Him. "Be it known unto you, that in the *name* (the character) of Jesus Christ and in none other is there salvation!" And what must one do to be saved? That which is necessary for us to believe and do for Christ to live in us. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt

be saved." Why? Because if I do truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, with my whole heart, mind, soul, and strength, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." And these are the essentials of membership in the Church of God because the essentials of salvation now and forever!

"Till the stars grow old,
Till the sun grows cold,
Till the leaves of the Judgment book unfold."

V
CHRISTIAN UNITY

V

CHRISTIAN UNITY¹

Christian unity does not mean uniformity—Rise of Sectarianism—Diverse gifts of all become the unified gift of each—The fivefold diversity in the ministry—Divine unity of the Church—One spirit and one faith make outward unity—Dreary chaos of infallible individualism—Real unity among all Christians—Superstructures of wood and stubble—The kind of Church needed.

I. CHRISTIAN UNITY DOES NOT MEAN UNIFORMITY.

ST. PAUL is always the Apostle St. Paul—the statesman of the church. He saw beneath the shallows into the eternal spirit of things, and in the midst of infinite variety saw all things united in God; that the church must have unity as there is unity in God and diversity as there is diversity in God; and speaks of our oneness in the Spirit with the Father

¹ After sermon by the late Professor Barbour of Berkeley Divinity School, Middletown, Conn.

and Son, as the bond of Christian Unity and also of diversity in Christian Unity.

That which preserved the Christian Church in Europe against the assaults of heathenism was the solid and united front it was able to present compact in one mighty organism, because it clearly grasped and steadfastly adhered to the essential idea of Church Unity outlined by St. Paul (Eph. 4:1-16). But when it lost sight of the other half of the truth—that while the Spirit is one there are diversities in the gifts of the Spirit; and in the place of diversity in unity tried to force uniformity upon the Christian world, the Catholic Church was split in two parts; one calling itself Roman, the other Protestant—and the truth of God was halved in the process of division. Truth in both, all the truth in neither; the truth the Romanist clings to and holds for all the world is the Unity of the Church; the truth the Protestant clings to and holds for all the world is diversity in the gifts of the Spirit in the Church; the error both alike commit is in holding and teaching that uniformity is of the essence of Church Unity.

It takes both Protestant and Romanist truth to make Catholic truth. There is but one force in nature, but it manifests itself as

the two opposing centripetal and centrifugal forces; the one left to itself would draw all things to the stagnation of a point, the other would throw all things off at a tangent making chaos. But when the two forces combine as circular force, the antagonistic forces harmonize in the beauty of its curves. So Catholic truth is the circle in which are united and harmonized all the contending and warring truths of the Romanist and Protestant; and the beloved St. Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles, is the great exemplar and expounder of our unity in God. His outline is :

1. One God and Father of all.
2. One Lord, one faith, one baptism of all.
3. One body, one spirit, one hope of all.

Which united in one statement is: by one Spirit are we all baptized into the one faith of the one Lord God and Father of us all, which makes the one hope and one body of us all. Upon all these *ones* unified in God St. Paul bases the Unity of the Church of God; and he no sooner states the Unity of the Church than the diversity in this Unity—“Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ;” and the sin of sectarianism is that men have perverted and distorted these gifts of the divine Spirit into endless causes of division;

using the richness of the diversity of the gifts of the One Spirit as the power with which to rend the Church of God into fragments: thus perverting the powers God has given us for our *salvation* into sectarian *strife*.

II. RISE OF SECTARIANISM.

It is true that Christhood is in all stages of growth in us, and that because of different degrees of Christian growth in us there will be different understandings of Christ; but because men have said in their infallible folly, that it is necessary for every man to understand Christ exactly alike in all particulars as conditions of membership in the same Church organization, the Church disintegrated into numberless sects. These different understandings of Christ, these different "measures of the gift of Christ," necessarily make different theologies which will always exist among men; but it is not necessary to have the same theology in the same Church; as a matter of fact no two members of the same Church have the same theology, and differing phases of theology enrich the life of the Church. The failure to recognize this truth and act accordingly, together with attempted uniformity in ritual, and despotism in Church government, is the rock upon which the Catholic Church split.

But how is that consummation of understanding Christ alike, so devoutly to be wished and prayed for by us all, ever to be attained? Rest assured it can never be done by those of us who happen to see the same few rays of light, making this the ground of separate Church organization, building high ecclesiastical fences, and barring ourselves behind them from all other Christians. How can I convince you of the truth I see, and you convince me of the truth you see, until each is convinced that he sees but a part, not all the truth? That the various societies in the Church are awakening to the fact that no one society has all the truth, but that "unto every one is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ;" and that it takes not this partial sectarian truth, but all the truth God has revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord to save man, is the ground and hope of Church Unity.

Ignorance, of which is born the prejudice and conceit of man, is the only insuperable bar to his progress. Alexander Stephens, in one of the most memorable speeches ever delivered in Congress said: "Prejudice! What wrongs, what injuries, what mischiefs, what lamentable consequences, have resulted at all times from this perversity of the intellect! Of all the obstacles to the advancement of truth and human

progress in every department of knowledge—in science, in art, in government and religion, in all ages and climes, not one is more formidable, more difficult to overcome and subdue, than this horrible distortion of the moral as well as the intellectual faculties. One of the highest exhibitions of the moral sublime the world ever witnessed was that of Daniel Webster, who after Faneuil Hall was denied him, he in an open barouche in the streets of Boston proclaimed in substance to a vast assembly of his constituents—unwilling hearers—that they had conquered an uncongenial clime; they had conquered a sterile soil; they had conquered the winds and the currents of the ocean; but they must yet learn to conquer their prejudices!” What Alexander Stephens said to the people of the North and South needs to be said in every Christian Society and indelibly engraved upon the heart and conscience of every Christian—let us conquer our prejudices; for our own prejudice, and the worship of our ancestor’s prejudices, is a far more important factor in keeping the Christian Societies of to-day apart, than any supposed antagonistic truths we may hold. The truth we hold is not and cannot be antagonistic, but is complementary. What is needed to-day above all things is for some one to scatter the fogs of

prejudice, so that we may see the absurdity of the position we may be in.

III. DIVERSE GIFTS OF ALL BECOME THE UNIFIED GIFT OF EACH.

Because no one has a monopoly of the truth in Christ, each but a child in this knowledge, "grace to each according to the gift of Christ," St. Paul urges all who call themselves Christians to remain together in one Church, in which ample provision is made for the enlightenment and progress of all. For, for this purpose God "gave gifts unto men; and He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." Why? because it takes more than one order in the ministry, and one kind of ministry, to completely man and equip the Church for its perfect work. It takes apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers—"for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying (building up) the body of Christ; till we all come into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

This is the Catholic Church as St. Paul outlined it, and the work it is to do for us men is "perfecting us unto the measure of the stature

of the fulness of Christ." The Church, grand, glorious and sublime, the body of Christ, filled with all the fulness of the truth of God in heaven for the needs and fulness of man on earth; so vast and expansive, that the kingdoms of the world can bring themselves and their glory into it, and be blessed and sanctified. The Catholic Church is no little, narrow, petty, human organization, formed by any clique of men to fit their preconceived opinions as to what it ought to be or ought not to be; but it is the Kingdom of Heaven covering the whole earth as the waters cover the sea, until God is known of all, loved of all, and is in us consciously all in all. This is the Catholic Church as St. Paul outlines it; a Unity, but the greatest diversity in this Unity to meet the diverse needs of humanity; Unity of the one baptism of all into the one faith, one Lord, one spirit, one body, one hope, one God and Father of all. Can there be a more complete unity than this? uniting heaven and earth and hell into the one communion of saints with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

IV. THE FIVEFOLD DIVERSITY IN THE MINISTRY.

That these diverse gifts of all might become the unified gift of each, Christ gave and

gives the five fold diversities in the ministry—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers—for the perfecting of the saints ; and that this perfecting work might go on St. Paul begs them from his dungeon prison in Rome : “I therefore the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love ; endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.” This fivefold diversity in the ministry is necessary for the Unity and perfecting of the Church.

(1) For the Unity of the Church and the unified action of the Church, the apostles are necessary, by whatever name you may call them. They are the executive officers of the Church as the governors are the chief officers of the states. For the state to have two governors would disrupt and divide it, producing anarchy as there was recently in Kentucky.

(2) The prophet is necessary to give us progressive knowledge of Christian truth. The truth does not progress of course. God's truth never changes ; but we need to make progress into the knowledge of this eternal truth. The prophet is ever the medium through whom the new inflow and fuller interpretation of

truth from God comes to us. The long line of Israel's prophets was the channel through which the progressive knowledge of divine truth from God inundated ancient Israel, until in the perfect man Christ Jesus, the windows of heaven were opened, the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and God's truth covered the round world. But while it is perfectly true, that all truth is in Christ Jesus, it is also equally true that we very imperfectly apprehend and understand Christ Jesus, of which no one was more fully aware than our Saviour Himself, who made provision for this gradual and more perfect knowledge of Himself in these words: "I have many things to tell you but ye are not able to hear them now; but when the spirit of truth is come He will guide you into all truth, for He shall take of mine and show it unto you." In the long line of Christian prophets this is being fulfilled.

(3) The evangelist is necessary to carry on the missionary operations of the Church, by spreading the knowledge of Christ and planting new Churches; for that Church which ceases to be missionary becomes a dead Church. Why cumbereth it the ground? Cut it down and cast it into the fire.

(4) The pastor is necessary to keep the local congregation together.

(5) The teacher is necessary to keep alive the old truth and permit none of it to perish.

These must always be in the Church: the pastor to keep the local congregation together; the apostle to bind the local congregations into the Unity of the whole Church, the unit through which all the congregations can act in their concerted action; the teacher to keep alive old truth in the Church so that it may not be forgotten; the prophet for the discovery of new truth out of the old revealed truth; the evangelist for the expansion of the Church by establishing new Churches. These are all necessary to perfect the Church until it covers the round world. These are the human conditions necessary for the Unity of the Church. But the essential Unity of the Church is divine, which man cannot make or break.

V. DIVINE UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

(1) There is one God and Father of us all. This is the basis of divine Unity—we are all children of one family; all of us, Romanist, Greek, Anglican Protestant; yes, even Turk, Jew, Heathen, Heretic, and infidel: of these the words of the prophet are true, "Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us?" (Mal. 2: 10). And the Christian Church

is the one home to which the one Father recalls His wandering sons. Can there be many families, many homes, with one head?

(2) There is the one Lord Jesus Christ who died to redeem us, and ascended to raise us. There is only one Christ: how can those who call themselves by His name, who acknowledge Him as their Lord and Master, ever be anything but one in Him?

(3) Since there is but one Lord how can there be but one Faith; for the Christian Creed is simply the facts concerning the one Lord.

(4) There is not only one God, one Lord, one faith, but *one baptism*. Baptism is a means of expressing our faith in Christ and His method of entering into personal union with us; it is therefore always one and the same. Whoever administers it, in whatever country, in whatever language, in whatever form, baptism always means the same thing and always accomplishes the same thing.

(5) This one baptism of all Christians makes them one body in Christ.

In *baptism* we find stress laid upon the outward as well as the inward—the outward body, the inward spirit. Just as in every man there are two parts, the outward body, which we can see and recognize; the inward spirit which makes the body alive, without which there

would be no body but a dead mass of matter. The Church is the one body of Christ (1 Cor. 12 : 27) something men can see and recognize, and the one spirit, the Holy Spirit, whose indwelling makes the one incarnate body of Christ, the Church, alive.

This is the Scriptural and ideal oneness of the Church : *One Father* to whom His wandering children are brought back ; *one Master*, Christ, who has brought us back ; concerning whom there is *one faith* ; and into whose body there is *one baptism* ; *one Holy Spirit* who inspires and makes live the *one body* of Christ, and enables it to press forward in the *one hope* of our calling—even the riches of our one inheritance in the kingdom of God on earth, in Paradise, and in Heaven. This is the complete outline of the divine Unity of the Church : nothing is lacking, nothing is superfluous—for there is the one Spirit incarnate in the one body, the Church.

VI. ONE SPIRIT AND ONE FAITH MAKE OUTWARD UNITY.

If any one at this point says, as people do say, that the present outward division among Christians is of no consequence ; that if Christians have one spirit and one faith it is enough, we reply : unity of spirit makes unity of body ;

spirits apart from bodies do not live in this world. When you separate spirit from body we call that "death." Nothing has ever worked or been effective in this world apart from body—not even God. Upon entrance into this world He came with body. "The Word became flesh" is the universal process of the *how* every spirit enters and works in this world. And until there is vitality enough in the one spirit and the one faith of Christians to build us into one organized, firmly-knit body, to dare hope or dream that the Church can do the work God intended it to do in this world, is sheer nonsense. The fire under the open, boiling pot generates steam, but it cannot turn a sewing machine. It is wasted power. But when you confine steam in a powerful engine, there is no limit to its power and usefulness, because it is combined and unified in a body. One drop of water is a helpless thing, but when you have untold numbers of these combined and unified by granite walls, you have the rushing mighty Niagara sufficient to turn the machinery of the world, the St. Lawrence upon which to float the fleets of the world. The United States is a powerful country because it is united, and the power of all the units can act as one unit through the President. If this were not so, the United States

would be no stronger than the strongest pugilistic prize-fighter in it !

The forces and powers that are forceful and powerful are united and embodied forces and powers. Our Saviour, when He prayed the Father that His Church might be one, as He was one with the Father, knew what He was about. What He prayed and worked for is worth our while to work and pray for. But in the teeth of all this, people try to persuade themselves that the Church of God splintered all to fragments is more effective than one united Church !

The rapidity with which the Church spread throughout the Roman Empire is one of the many sudden and remarkable surprises of history. In 100 years the Church had been planted wherever the Roman eagles had flown. Together with the wonderful preparedness of the world for Christianity, these words will give you the other necessary condition of its rapid spread : " They continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in the Prayers " (Acts 2: 42). They maintained Church unity. They continued steadfastly in the *Apostles' doctrine*—the one faith ; in the *Apostles' fellowship*—the one body ; *breaking bread*—continuing in the sacramental unity begun in the one bap-

tism ; *the prayers*—joining in common worship as children of the one family of the one Father : and they had every variety of theology and form of worship possible with loyalty to Christ, but their differing theologies and forms of worship did not break the Unity of the Church ; for a person who was a member of one congregation was a member of all, and a person who was a minister in one congregation was a minister in all. That Unity which won such signal, rapid, and far-reaching conquests in the first centuries we have shattered into hundreds of fragments, losing effectiveness and power for good to the extent that Unity has been broken !

VII. DREARY CHAOS OF INFALLIBLE INDIVIDUALISM.

It is said the darkest hour always comes just before the dawn ; so when the Church is most divided there is most rational and genuine hope for Church Unity—the thing carried to its logical consequences opens our eyes to its folly and sin.

(1) In the 143 Christian Societies I see the greatest hope of Church Unity, because something which is claimed to infallibly mean 143 exclusive things soon comes to mean nothing : for the 143 societies in the one Church of Christ,

with every variety of theology and form of worship, has forever made it impossible for us again to identify religion with any one theology and ritual; but it has taught us, let us hope once and for all, that every variety of ritual and form of theology will henceforth be necessary for the well-being and perfect equipment of the Church for its work at home and in the missionary field, in both of which it will have to commend itself to men in every stage of mental and spiritual development.

(2) There is hope of Church Unity in the fact that the great majority of the members of all Societies, when asked why they are members of this or that Society, reply: because my ancestors were members of this Society, and we remain members because of prejudice, business connections, and social ties. The hope in this state of things is found in the fact that the children no longer find any interest in the things which divided our ancestors; because the forces and issues which divided the Church are dead forces and issues. The laity do not care enough about these things to disinter them from their decent burial in cyclopædias. The hope in this state of things is, that a Church run upon ancestor worship, business connections, social ties, ignorance, and prejudice, ought not to last and cannot last. It

takes God, and the truth of God, and all the truth of God, revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord, to keep our souls alive and make them grow into the fulness of His stature. Sectarianism makes lean, stunted, starved Christians, because they feed upon fragmentary sectarian truth, and not the whole truth in Christ Jesus.

The people of this country will not let the dead quarrels of our ancestors forever separate us from one another. We will forever honor our ancestors for the sacrifices they made for the precious truth they have recovered and given us, and we will engraft and reincorporate it into the one Church of God ; the truth the Christian prophets have recovered for us— John Calvin rescued the doctrine of the sovereignty of God and the election of man from the oblivion in which it was buried, and with it broke the rights divine of kings ; Martin Luther rediscovered the doctrine of justification by faith, and with it broke the usurpation of Pope and Priest ; Roger Williams fought to successful issue the right of every man to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience ; John Wesley that religion is a vital, personal, spiritual experience in each individual soul ; the Christian Scientist that there is no absolute evil. These are truths the world can never again afford to forget ; these

are truths which can never be left out of the Christian faith, if we are to have it in the perfect proportion of its life-giving power and grace; but we who live to-day can most honor these men, who rediscovered these priceless truths for us, by recovering that truth they lost when they broke and lost the Unity of the Church. This is the mission unto which God is calling every society of Christians in this age. When this is done, then indeed and in truth, we will have the American Catholic Church.

(3) The most hopeful sign is, that to-day we are seeing that there is some truth in every one of the 143 societies in the Church, but all the truth in none; and that it takes all the truth to save us. There is secret and often openly expressed dissatisfaction in all the societies of Christendom, not because of the truth they contain, but because of the truth they do not contain. This will be so and ought to be so, until every Christian has the fulness of the Faith in due proportion, all the truth of God in the beauty of its unity.

VIII. REAL UNITY AMONG ALL CHRISTIANS.

But what I wish to emphasize now is, that when man has done his worst, there remains a

real unity among all those who profess and call themselves Christians, which man cannot break. And, because in the deepest and most real sense, Christian Unity never has and never can be broken, it is only a question of time and education when the grace of God will reunite into the Unity of His Church, that which we have shattered into fragments.

I mean this: there is a unity which, so long as a man is a *Christian at all*, must exist between him and all other Christians, whether they call themselves Romanists, Anglicans, or Evangelicals. Our Unity in the deepest sense we cannot make, nor can we break. *Our Unity is in God the Father.* There is a unity among the children of a family, which those children cannot dissolve. They may quarrel; they may refuse to speak to one another; they may live as far asunder as the poles: yet they are still brothers and sisters and can never be anything else. *They did not make themselves brothers, nor can they unmake their brotherhood.* And so we will forever continue to say: "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church," though the ignorance, prejudice, pride, and sin of man, rend it into a million fragments.

How are Christians still one in spite of our ignorance, conceit, and prejudice? In this way: *One God and Father of all*—Him we

all worship, our Father by creation and redemption. *Is there not one Lord?* Whoever thought that Roman, Anglican, or Evangelical, believed in different Christs? *Is there not one faith?* Do we not all hold the same belief in Christ as expressed in the creed?

And is there not one baptism? No educated Christian says: I was baptized into the Baptist Church; you were baptized into the Methodist Church; or Episcopal Church; even the Romanist says, as the great body of the Church has said in all ages, that any one baptized with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is baptized into the Church of Jesus Christ. There is *one baptism*; it refuses to be called by any sectarian name: it is Christian baptism!

No person was ever baptized into any sectarian society. No sect has ever laid its hands on the formula of baptism and changed it, saying: I baptize thee into the Baptist, Methodist, Roman society; but every person who has ever been baptized was in this way—"I baptize thee into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," which baptism makes one a member of the Church of God.

For as St. Paul says (1 Cor. 12:13) "by one spirit we are all baptized into one body."

And no believer in Christ, who is sincere and true in his faith, no matter how mistaken he may be in his opinions, has lost the Holy Spirit. When we look around and see the fruits of the spirit in the Romanist and Protestant alike, there is but one answer to be given—they all have the spirit ; but none all of it, each according to the gift of Christ. Here is the basis of Christian unity which none of us made and none of us can break : one God, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one spirit, one hope, and calling of us all. Here we are all united.

IX. SUPERSTRUCTURES OF WOOD AND STUBBLE.

Our divisions begin, and must begin, the moment we add to this foundation, superstructures of our own which separate and bar us off one from another. These separating superstructures of wood and stubble, which divide Christendom into warring camps, we ought to tear down lest God in His wrath burn them down and burn us in the burning.

The practical question for all Christian people is : what can we do to hasten Church Unity ? First of all we can, by the grace of God, try to accomplish that hardest of all tasks—rid ourselves and those whom we can in-

fluence of unworthy prejudice. Second, we can teach those committed to us what we believe and why we believe it, exactly what things are essential and what things are not essential, and why they are so. Third, we can learn not to ignore the Unity which already exists, and cooperate as children of the one Father, believers in the one Lord, filled with the one Spirit, as the eternal basis of Christian Unity and the only hope of Church Unity.

For no society can arrogate to itself the most holy and sacred title of the Church of God, until it is as high, as broad, and as deep as the truth revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord. No society can call itself the Church of Christ, until it accepts all whom Christ accepts, and includes in itself all Christians, and all forms of worship and Christian activity in the community, in which we live. If your society or my society teaches anything as essential for membership, that will exclude any Christian in the community, then it is indeed a church of our own making, but alas! it is not Christ's Church.

A society of Christians appeals to the community in which it is located, not because it is a private spiritual club, but only to the extent it can convince the citizenship of the community that it is the Church of Christ. A

society can make its claim good as a church only when it can appeal—"in the name of Christ!" and substantiate its claim by winning the confidence and support of every Christian in the community. Why can no one society in this town do this? Because no one society perfectly represents Christ. Christ appeals to larger groups of people than any one society which has as yet set up housekeeping in His name. *But when we have the Catholic Church of Christ in the United States it will appeal to all whom Christ attracts.*

If any one society of Christians in this town will make its terms of membership, Christian activity, and forms of worship, as inclusive as Christ, I give you my word of honor that I will do all I can to get my people to join you. This is why I have been laying so much stress upon the *essentials of Church membership*. If we say a man must believe this and do this before he can become a member of our society, and at the same time we are forced to admit that you need not believe this nor do this to get into heaven, we then stand before the world self-condemned holy hypocrites, whose ecclesiastical scalp ought to be taken by every self-respecting man in the world.

No society of Christians can grow, save to the extent that it can convince its adherents

and the world, that it is no spiritual club, but the Church of God. In the bygone days of ignorance, prejudice, and bigotry, our spiritual clubs were honest in the contention that they were exclusively the Church of God—but to-day when one makes such a claim he comes perilously near being a hypocrite; at best, convinces few beside himself. Of course, there will always be a constituency of ignorance, bigotry, and prejudice in the world; and one, if he chooses to do so, can make his appeal to this with the assurance that he can gain a certain following; but the time is fast approaching when no spiritually minded or intelligent person can do so without committing the sin against the Holy Spirit of truth!

I would that these words might ring around the world, and awake the sleeping conscience of every Christian. Make the conditions of membership in our societies what a man must believe and do to get into heaven; then if we don't know what that is, let us close our doors and stop trying to deceive ourselves and the world by calling our exclusive holy clubs the Church of Almighty God. For he, who in this year of grace, knowingly and willingly does aught to drive apart, or keep further apart, the broken fragments of Christ's Church, is an arch-traitor in God's house and commits

high treason against our Lord Jesus Christ, who in infinite love died to save us all ! The fulness of time has come for Christians to let the dead past bury its now outgrown, discredited, dishonored, and unholy dead. For the causes, that disrupted the Church of God four hundred years ago, are dead ; and why not bury the ghastly, horrid corpse out of sight forever !

X. THE KIND OF CHURCH NEEDED.

The unity of the Church is not in an official organization, but in God and in the people of God, whose servant the official organization is. We need a Church in this land in which the people are brethren and Christ only is Lord ; a Church in which there can be no ecclesiastical tyranny ; a Church in which a simple creed stating the facts of religion suffices for clergy and laity alike ; the local congregation having any form of worship it pleases, and managing its own family affairs to its heart's content ; in communion with the Church throughout the world, in which a minister in one congregation is a minister in all. If such a Church is not in existence, in the name of God we ought to make it !

In the early ages of the Church, to be a

member of one congregation of Christians was to be a member of any congregation in all the round world. He who was able to administer the sacraments in one congregation could administer them in all. Those were days of power in the Church. But to-day a clergyman is a minister in one congregation and is debarred from administering the sacraments in another congregation across the street. Not until one becomes a raving lunatic, ought he to be convinced that this is pleasing to Almighty God!

What is needed now above all things is to get the grace of God into us, and get out of us this ignorance and prejudice, whence arises diabolical confusion in the Church of God. We want a Church in this land big enough to hold all the Christian people in this land, educate us out of our sectarian narrowness, unify us in one organization as comprehensive as Christ, and let us have our private pious opinions to our heart's content, trusting as Christ did to the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth. We want a Church that cares nothing about conflicting theologies, knowing they will all perish; a Church based upon facts not theories; a Church of law, order, and liberty, that does not let one man impose his pious opinions upon another man as the law of God.

Doubtless there will always be some, who will make a virtue of being unlike other people, and hold up their right hands and swear to "rule or ruin." These, of course, will persist in being sectarians to the end of time. But the number of these is happily growing less. There are many people in this land, and where you would least expect it, praying the prayer our Saviour prayed when He instituted the Holy Communion: "*I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.*"

Do you cry impossible! to this last and perpetual prayer of our Lord Jesus Christ? Then in the language of Dr. Huntington: "Well, perhaps so, but I should be sorry to see that word 'impossible' affixed, in the Church's own handwriting, to an enterprise which secular societies are accomplishing every day. Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon, that a unity to which the order of Freemasons and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers have succeeded in attaining by voluntary effort, and under no other controlling force than that of sympathy and a sense of common need, has been declared by the Church of Christ in the United States

of America a thing impossible!" Then will I cover my face in shame, and confess that the pride, prejudice, conceit, and sin of man, have made the Church of God a colossal failure!

VI
CHURCH UNITY

VI

CHURCH UNITY¹

The devil of division—What is meant by Church Unity—Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral—Principles of Church Unity—How Church Unity can be obtained—Purpose of the Church to make Christians—Form of Church government—Methods of Church government combined—Forms of worship diversified to suit the needs of the people—Practical advantages—Reconciler and peacemaker.—The Watchwords.

I. THE DEVIL OF DIVISION.

THE child who in the New England village of two hundred years ago saw, or in a South German village of to-day habitually sees, all the people passing on the Lord's day through one porch into the Lord's house, grew up and grows up taking religion for granted. The American child of the present

¹ Much of this chapter is taken verbatim et literatim from Dr. Huntington's *Church Idea, National Church*, and *The Talisman of Unity*, Charles Scribner's Sons, N. Y.; from Rev. Mr. Crapey's pamphlets published by George W. Jacobs, Phila., Pa.; and from Rev. Mr. Skagen's *Church of the Reconstruction*, Thomas Whittaker, N. Y.

generation, who sees his playmates on six days of the week go through the one school-house door, and on one day of the week sees six differently labeled church doors crying out to the same boys and girls "Come in," inevitably conceives of religion as a matter in debate. "When I grow up," he says to himself, "I will find out what all this means. Somehow it looks as if our fathers and mothers do not feel about praying as they do about schooling." Yes, these things tell. Doubtless, in the triumvirate of evil, the world and the flesh are the predominant partners in enticing souls away from God; but, in any fair reckoning, the devil of division should have his due.

Count the steeples in an American town. It is all very well to say that they are so many finger-posts pointing heavenwards. In reality each is the representative of a certain portion of truth, torn out of its place in the perfect circle of Catholic truth, and mangled in the process. It is often a partial, petty, and an antagonistic presentation of the Church of God.

No one can ever know how large a proportion of our current infidelity is traceable to the disgust engendered in educated minds by sectarian narrowness. The thoughtful boy,

coming suddenly to the knowledge that the ocean of God's truth is broader and deeper than the village mill-pond by which he was brought up, is often hasty to resolve that he will start upon the open sea in his own ship, unpiloted and with no compass but the stars.

But the individual mind, however marvelously fashioned and endowed, is never competent to gather into itself the full wealth of the Christian revelation; and a sect, that does no more than reflect the thoughts of some spiritual giant of the past, is forever liable to overthrow at the hands of some spiritual giant of the present, possibly a child of its own begetting. Happy those souls who are content to rest in a truth larger than they grasp, willing "to know in part" but not willing to call a part the whole.

The American people are an intensely practical people. Endowed with a large allowance of common sense, fertile in expedients, and prompt in action, they are not apt to be long tolerant of a proved absurdity. Only let the religious portion of our community become once persuaded, that it is a palpable absurdity to call the existing jumble of denominations, followings, and sects, Christian Unity, they will work night and day and pray

day and night, until something better is brought to pass. We have learned that the efficiency of an army is dependent upon the thoroughness of its organization and the harmonious workings of its parts. Now the Church is the people of God and the army of Christ. It is scarcely necessary to say more—the illustration enforces itself.

II. WHAT IS MEANT BY CHURCH UNITY ?

That all people are to be Methodists or Baptists or Presbyterians or Romanists or Episcopalians ? No : these only in so far as it is necessary to be Christians. By Church Unity is meant : (1) A church whose condition of membership is what a man must believe and do to be saved from a sinful life, (2) a member of one congregation a member of all, (3) a minister in one congregation a minister in all.

Here I quote and make my own, with some additions, from the Rev. Edward M. Skagen, in *The Church Family Magazine* for May, 1902, in which he shows that the terms of Church Unity do not involve the surrender of our neighbor's form of worship, nor those agencies he has found useful in winning souls for Christ : but that, if our neighbor uses only

one form of worship and only one kind of agency, *then* the Church of Christ is larger than his form of worship, and includes agencies that he does not use.

Church Unity means that the Church in any given locality is composed of all the Christians in that locality, whose terms of membership are comprehensive enough to include every Christian in that locality; and use, if necessary, every form of worship that has been found useful in building Christian character, and every agency that has won souls for Christ. In a word, while the sect is not to surrender its "peculiarity," it is to incorporate the useful peculiarities of all other societies, and so become *transformed* into the Catholic Church of God.

It is either a naive innocence, or a mischievous sense of humor, which occasionally prompts men to say, that if sects would surrender their "peculiarities," the problem of Church Unity would find a ready solution. To the American Calvinistic and Independent societies, it is a "peculiarity" to wear anything but the ordinary street garb, when conducting the worship of the people. To Romans, Anglicans, and Lutherans, it is a most "peculiar" and novel custom not to teach the Unity of Christendom past and present, to the eye as well as

to the ear, by the minister's clothes as well as by his talk.

If both parties were to disregard these respective "peculiarities," the appearance of the officiating clergyman would be somewhat embarrassing to people, who have gotten out of the garden of Eden. Even the "rags of popery" to cover him would be better than nothing at all.

As with the mere outward appearance of the minister, so with his manner of public worship, of Church government, and all else.

Either there is such a thing as the Christian Church in the United States or not. Scripture, logic, reverence, and decency forbid the assumption that there should be more than one Church of Christ.

The Church is the incarnate body of Christ. Reason forbids that Christ should have many bodies.

The Church by another figure of speech is the bride of Christ. Reverence forbids the blasphemous theory that Christ has many rival brides.

The Church of "Holy Scripture and Ancient Authors" is the entire body of the baptized faithful.

It is a house to which every Christian carries the key, to which every Christian be he

pope or layman, archbishop or street-corner evangelist, can admit others by baptism. All we have to do is to recognize this in our ecclesiastical arrangements. No intelligent, spiritual, godly-minded person pretends that his own denomination, be it "Episcopal" or "Independent," comprises the whole American Church.

What then are all our denominations? They are not churches but religious societies and orders within the Church, each giving to the Church that particular service which, in the providence of God, it has been called upon to render.

As a matter of fact, the first society in the Church of Christ in America, that took stock of itself, and under the moulding power of this ideal, honestly tried to transform itself into the Catholic Church, was the Protestant Episcopal society, in the year 1887.

Just about one year ago, in the last General Convention in San Francisco, Dr. Huntington, of New York, used this language: "I say, build large; not for the sake of any little group of people who may be found here and there, but for the sake of setting this Church right with the Christian public of this land. . . . I say, build large; not

only because we owe a debt to the founders of this republic, but also because we owe a debt to that grand communion which has been transplanted to our soil, the Roman Catholic Church.

"Years ago, when I was a young man in orders, in the only charge I ever had before the present one, I caused to be inscribed over the chancel arch of the little wooden church, in which it was my privilege to minister, these words: 'There shall be one fold and one Shepherd.' One winter's night the little church was burned. In the morning I went out to take account of what was left. The roof had fallen in, the tower was toppling, the windows were destroyed, the chancel was gone; but there stood the arch and on it the inscription: 'There shall be one fold and one Shepherd.'"

Way back in those early years, the one great passion which filled and completely dominated his life was to make his own society in the Church of God most truly Catholic—simple, comprehensive, and including in itself every activity found useful in building Christian character. He stood up and said in the Creed, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church"—while that which

actually was in existence was a Sectarian Society.

So by the help of God, it was put into his heart to bring better things to pass. In 1870, in a sermon preached in Grace church, New York, he formulated the now famous Quadrilateral in which he defined what he believed the Catholic Church is, and what the Protestant Episcopal Society must become, if it was ever to be truly Catholic.

He believed that charity began at home, and endowed with large capacity for work and a patience that acknowledged no defeat, he worked steadily onward, until in 1887, in the convention in Chicago, the victory was won; and in 1888, the English Church ratified with slight verbal changes what the Episcopal Church had done in America. This result was brought about by many minds and many forces working harmoniously together in the fulness of time; but Dr. Huntington led this Catholic minded host. In a letter written me since this series of sermons began, he says: "You are quite welcome to quote as freely as you please from my books. I am only too glad to have the ideas and suggestions, which I have been led to make during the last forty years, given

wider circulation. There seems to be a brightening of the sky all around in this matter of Unity, and there is much to encourage the hope that, even in this century, the desired consummation may come to pass."

The Episcopal Society in the Church in America, after a long and hard fight against ignorance, bigotry, and prejudice in our own communion, now asks all other communions to join us in the same prayer and struggle for Church Unity in Christ, in the hope that during the present century, all the societies in the Church of God may become so Catholic in spirit, that we may have one outwardly organized Catholic Church in America. The proposed basis of unity is known as the —

CHICAGO-LAMBETH QUADRILATERAL.

I. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as "containing all things necessary to salvation," and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.

II. The Apostles' Creed as the baptismal symbol; and the Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith.

III. The two sacraments ordained by Christ Himself—Baptism and the Supper of the Lord—ministered with the unfailing use

of Christ's words of institution and of the elements ordained by Him.

IV. The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration, to the varying needs of the nations, and peoples, called of God in the unity of His Church.

All of which, translated into language understood of the people, and adapted to the needs of the people of Baldwin County, and all other counties, I believe is as follows:

PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH UNITY.

I.

That the Christian people of Baldwin County is the Church of God in Baldwin County, and is directly responsible to God for the spread of His kingdom in this county.

II.

That nothing shall be required of any man as necessary for membership in the church, but what he must believe and do to be saved from a sinful life and grow into a Christlike life.

III.

That this is contained in these four questions and answers:

1. Dost thou renounce the devil and all his

works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the flesh, so that thou wilt not follow, nor be led by them?

Answer. I renounce them all; and by God's help will endeavor not to follow nor be led by them.

2. Dost thou believe all the articles of the Christian faith as contained in the Apostles' Creed? *Answer.* I do.

3. Wilt thou be baptized in this faith? *Answer.* That is my desire.

4. Wilt thou obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life? *Answer.* I will by God's help.

IV.

That every congregation which shall accept the above conditions will also accept the Bible as the written revelation of God and Man, and use it in its public worship.

V.

Use the baptismal formula of Trinity in Unity—"I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost"—with the use of water as the sacrament of admission into the Church of God.

VI.

Use the Lord's Supper in the words of our Lord's institution, with bread and wine given to all the communicants.

VII.

That every congregation manage its family affairs as it sees fit, and have any form of worship it desires.

VIII.

That all congregations which accept the above principles are already spiritually united and should take steps to have Church Unity.

HOW CHURCH UNITY CAN BE OBTAINED.

IX.

By every clergyman and layman using the power of prayer and wise advocacy for the spread of these principles, until the majority of Christians in his individual congregation can be won to this position, and have them adopted.

X.

Then let such congregations elect its minister and lay delegates to represent them in a convention assembled in the county, for the purpose of electing one of its ministers the

executive head of the church in his county, together with representative laymen and clergy, who will constitute the executive board of the church in that county.

XI.

That representatives of Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and every denomination taking part in this church consolidation, be asked to unite in consecrating this minister elect to the office of Overseer or Bishop in the Church of God in that county.

XII.

The duty of this Bishop shall be (1) to be permanent chairman of the convention called once a year in that county, (2) to ordain clergy, (3) in churches desiring it, to administer the right of confirmation, (4) to have charge, together with the executive board of which he shall be chairman, of the missionary work in that county, (5) to visit and preach in all congregations at least once a year, and if desired consult with the minister and representatives of the congregations in all things pertaining to their peace and prosperity.

XIII.

Each congregation shall elect once a year lay

delegates to represent them in the county convention, its minister being a perpetual delegate.

XIV.

Members accepted from any Christian Society by transfer, signed by proper authorities certifying their Christian character, or from personal knowledge of the minister receiving the applicant.

XV.

It would be worse than folly to propose any method of consolidation, that would degrade any minister from the rank and office he now holds in his own communion, or to propose to reordain him. This would not mean Church Unity but Church disintegration. In the case of the person elected to the office of Bishop he would become Pastor-in-chief to new communions, which would necessitate representation of all denominations taking part in this consolidation, uniting in inducting him into his new duties and enlarged responsibilities as Bishop in the Church of God.

XVI.

That as soon as possible and practical, steps be taken to have State and National unity of

the Church, without any violation of the foregoing principles which are: The unity of the Church is in the personal union of God and the people of God, not in any system of theology, or philosophy of the sacraments; that we are all brethren with one Master, Christ; that every congregation is a pure democracy; that the congregations of Christians are ecclesiastically united in one Church, through authority delegated to its ministers and lay representatives, the whole Church having a constitution above any officer or layman in the Church.

XVII.

It is the purpose of this consolidated Church to maintain, in every community in the land, a Church in which the Gospel is preached every Sunday; and a Sunday-school, in which the children shall be taught the Bible, and the facts of Christianity as contained in the Apostles' Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer.

XVIII.

In communities able to support only one minister there shall be only one church building, leaving the form of service to suit the people. In case there are preferences for both

a liturgical and a less formal service, it will be arranged to suit all by having both kinds of service at different times on the same day.

III. PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH TO MAKE CHRISTIANS.

It will not be surprising if these propositions are met at first with cries of, impossible ! This is to be expected ; but rest assured they will stand, safely weather any storm, and in the end triumph over all obstacles. And to reassure those, who in the first moments may think this too good to be realized, let me reassert what everybody already knows and believes—that there is but one straight road to salvation ; that which makes a man a Christian in one Society makes him a Christian in all : so much so, that if it was the one only and supreme purpose of our spiritual clubs to make *Christians* we would Church Unity day after to-morrow. I wish to invite your especial attention to the salient and fundamental features of this proposed plan of Church Unity ; and, first, its form of Church government.

IV. THEORIES OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

There have been these theories of Church government : (1) That it centres in the Pope, (2) in the College of Bishops, (3) in the Pres-

byters, (4) in the laity : while in reality the government is in God and in the people of God consisting of Bishops, Presbyters, and laymen ; the official organization being the servant and shepherd of the people.

(1) The first theory holds that our blessed Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, delegated that power the Father gave to Him in heaven and on earth to St. Peter, who went to Rome and centred the Church in that city and in himself as Bishop in that city. St. Peter, according to this theory, is not so much the head of the Church as he is the Church ; the Church derives its life from him, and out of him has no existence. Then St. Peter in turn handed on his power to his successor, and so it has come down from the first Bishop of Rome to the last, and whoever happens for the time being to occupy that office is *ex-officio* clothed with divine wisdom and divine power. His will is law and his word is infallible. This theory is the one upon which the Roman Society is based and which found its last expression in the decrees of the Vatican Council.

(2) But it would be a mistake to suppose that this theory is not to be found outside the pale of Rome. Indeed the extreme high church theory in the Episcopal Society is only a modification of the Roman theory. The

Lord Jesus according to this theory delegated His power not to one man, St. Peter, but to twelve men of whom St. Peter was only one. That these twelve men handed their power on to their immediate successors and so on down to our day. But in the Episcopal Society in America this has never been more than a theory of some of its members and clergymen. The whole genius and legislation of this Society in America is directly opposed to this theory and nullifies it in practice.

(3) Nor is the Protestant world free from this conception of the ministry. The reformers broke the papal machine only to put a machine of their own in its room. In the place of the Pope and College of Bishops they put a consistory of Presbyters who established an intellectual tyranny even more galling than that of the Pope and Bishops. They went upon the theory that they had exhausted the mind of God, and that ever afterwards the only thing for the human mind to do was to think what they had thought and say what they had said. One might with dignity submit his intelligence to a great and venerable Church, but not to lay priests, and infallible Presbyterian Popes. To-day every man is a pope, and if we are ever to have Church Unity again, it must be that of perfect freedom

from official, theological, and mob tyranny. In that great upheaval of religious life in the sixteenth century, called the Reformation, the theory that the life of the Church centres in an official organization received its death-blow. Like all great ideas which have once dominated the human mind it dies slowly, but it is dying ; it is no longer in Papal, Episcopal, or Presbyterian forms of the past, a living, workable theory. The unity and life of the Church is in God and in the Christian people themselves. The continuity of the Church's life is in the living stream of people in whom Christ is incarnating Himself !

Church government in this country takes on one or the other of three forms, according as it inclines to emphasize the principle of home rule, counsel and advice, or leadership and concentration of power in the hands of an executive who acts for the whole ; or what is commonly known as Congregationalism, Presbyterianism, and Episcopacy.

1. *Congregationalism*.—The Congregationalists believe with all their heart in a method which makes much of the local flock looked after by the local shepherd. This, they say, is the true unit, this group of souls, large enough fully to engage the energies of one

pastor, and not too large to be gathered within four walls. They remind us that St. Paul speaks of being burdened with the care of all the "churches" not of "all the church," and they urge that when he does speak of "the church" in the singular number, what he has in mind is the choir invisible of faithful souls rather than any hard-and-fast general society by which the whole earth is to be spread.

2. *Presbyterianism*.—The Presbyterians are of the opinion that this view of the matter is too loose. They deprecate the isolation of the single flock. They favor consultation among the shepherds, and more concert of action in the matter of tending and feeding the sheep; for, after all, the flock is one; and that various reading in St. John's tenth chapter does not really work any serious amendment to Christ's parable: the flock is one; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

3. *Episcopacy*.—Episcopalians urge, with a good deal of insistency, the value of headship in everything that has the character of an enterprise. Jesus Christ, they argue, has essayed the spiritual conquest of the world. He sanctioned it again and for all time, when

after His resurrection He said to these same companions of His who had known His mind and become sharers of His purpose, "Go—preach—absolve—baptize." That Episcopalians would be found so arguing, their very name might forewarn us. Episcopacy is nothing if not executive, a Bishop meaningless save as a leader.

V. THE THREE METHODS OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT COMBINED.

Since each of these three methods has so many adherents, the probability is that there must be much good in each ; and that better than the victory of any one would be the prevalence of some wise combination of them all ; and I would like for all to see the necessity of this. When a church consists of more than one congregation, it actually has and can only be united by what is in reality the Episcopacy by whatever other name you may call it. When our Baptist brethren wish to unite in one common work as one people in the Lord they elect delegates to a common council, which elects a moderator who is the temporary head through whom they act—as much *de facto* Bishop as any in the Episcopal Society. This temporary Baptist Bishop can make no law in the Baptist Society, any more

than a Bishop in the Episcopal Society can, than the Governor of a state can.

The four theories of church government are, (1) That the Bishop of Rome should govern the Church, (2) that the College of Bishops should govern the Church, (3) that the presbyters should govern the Church, (4) that the laity should govern the Church. These are all exclusive sectarian methods of church government, which were not known in the Christian Church of the early ages. It excluded the Pope idea altogether, and included the last three in one well proportioned system, in which no one order exclusively but all legislated together in the Church. In the first church council the whole church took part. "Apostles, elders, with the whole church," "the Apostles, elders, and brethren send greeting" (Acts 15: 22-28).

In this proposed plan of church government the ancient order is restored. The congregational theory is used as far as possible, which is one congregation or parish; no one parish interfering with any other parish, each managing its own family affairs as it pleases. The moment two or more congregations act together as a larger unit, the representative or Presbyterian idea finds its fitting place; the congregation elects and delegates its authority

to its lay representatives who act for the parish in conventions, its minister being a delegate by virtue of his office. The Bishop is the permanent officer of the diocese, association, synod, or whatever name you may choose to call this permanent aggregation of Christians. When legislation is passed by a majority vote of Bishops, Presbyters, and Laity, it becomes a law in the Church. No one rules the other—they all rule together.

VI. TERRITORIAL BASIS.

The Christian Church in this land, seeking for a self-consistent basis of organization, could not do better than accept for such a purpose the scheme which Americans in their political capacity have already fastened upon us as best; namely, the Republic, the State, and the County.

1. *The Church in the County.*—Imagine a county church. The centre of administration is the county town. Here dwells the Chief Pastor of the Christians of the county. His position is one of dignity and his duties are far more urgent than his honors are conspicuous. He is simply the master-missionary of the region. From time to time, at stated intervals, there gather about this leader his

counsellors, clerical and lay. He and they consult together for the good of religion in the county, talk over the spiritual needs of the towns and villages, plan anew the ever-shifting campaign, and make provision for the sinews of war. It is not necessary that all the nominal Christians in the county have given in their adhesion to this arrangement; it will suffice if the great bulk of them have done so.

Here we have a microcosm of the United Church. The home-rule principle, for which Baptists and Congregationalists contend, has justice done to it; for the local church of each town, each village, as respects the management of its affairs, the choice of its pastor, the handling of its revenues, is autonomous. The synod and conciliar principle, for which Presbyterians contend, has justice done to it, for instead of a little group of disciples living by itself and for itself, as if no other group existed, we see the representatives of the groups coming together once a year, or as much oftener as may be found desirable, to exchange ideas and incite one another to better things. The principle of leadership, for which Episcopalians and Methodists contend, has justice done to it; for, convinced that everybody's business is nobody's business, the Chris-

tian people have seated at the heart of things one whom they hold in a special sense responsible for the efficient conduct of their affairs. What is there inherently absurd or chimerical in such a picture as this? The very same three principles work together happily enough in civil government; what is to prevent their doing so in church government?

2. *The Church in the State.*—Imagine the overseers of the various counties coming together with representatives, pastors and laymen from each county, meeting together once in three years, or oftener if necessary, in the capital city of the state. There are religious interests that people have in common as citizens of the same state other and larger than those which they share as dwellers in the same county; such interests, for example, as those that pertain to marriage and divorce, education of the young, and the tenure of church property. The presidency of this larger council would naturally fall to one of the county overseers, either because of his seniority in office, or because of the relative importance of the town or city which happens to be the centre of his activities.

3. *The Church in the Nation.*—Imagine an

assembly convened once in nine years, or oftener if necessary, and representative of all the states in the Union; the smaller of the two houses made up of representative chief pastors, one or at most two, for each state; and the larger composed of pastors and laymen in numbers proportionate to the population of the states from which they come. As in the case of the state council, the presidency of this national body might be determined, either by seniority or by such other consideration, as experience should show to be the most urgent.

VII. FORMS OF WORSHIP.

As there are three leading types of church government, so there are three leading types of divine service; (1) the unliturgical form of our Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian brethren, (2) the elaborate liturgical, (3) the intermediate variety of most Episcopal churches. What are we to do with these in the interest of Church Unity? Abolish two of the three? That would be an arduous undertaking. Jumble all three of them together the like of which was never seen before? That would seem to be an endeavor less promising still. But what is there foolish in the suggestion, that a single building, by

the simple device of a greater frequency in the hours of service than is common among Protestants, might be made to meet the devotional needs alike of those who love a formal, and those who prefer a less formal method of worshipping God.

There may be, there probably are Episcopalians and Roman Catholics among us sanguine enough to suppose that the rising tide of liturgical interest so noticeable in the religious life of America just now, is destined to continue rising until it shall have swept everything before it. "Wait a little and you will hear all American Christians singing their prayers on one note." I doubt it. We Americans are not all musical and the unmusical ones are likely in "this free country," to go on saying instead of singing their prayers to the end of the chapter. If liturgical worship really does possess that superior excellence which many of us associate with it, we may safely trust to the workings of the law of natural selection to bring things out right in the end. Why should it be any greater hardship to dwell in the same church with a man who dotes on candles and incense than to dwell in the same town with him? It is I who have to be "tolerated" as well as he.

VIII. PRACTICAL ADVANTAGES.

We pass to the next question. What would be the practical advantages of Church Unity if the thing were brought to pass? I scorn to dwell upon the utilitarian answer which might be made to this question were one willing to make it. I spare you a statement of the savings that would accrue to vestries, music committees, sextons and Sunday-school superintendents, were one strong church to be substituted for half a dozen puny and ineffective ones in every village of the land. To dwell upon this phase of the subject would mean lowering and vulgarizing the whole movement.

But let me instance two points in which Church Unity would prove itself of the greatest possible value. Everybody has been praising General Kitchener's reconquest of the Sudan. And which was the particular feature of the campaign that called forth from competent critics the warmest commendations? It was the marvelous preparedness which characterized the whole process from first to last. So carefully were the different branches of the service coordinated, so thoroughly did each arm serve and support every other arm that the invasion went forward with all the irresistible steadiness of a tidal wave.

Christendom is to-day moving upon heathen-

dom with a zeal never before surpassed. But what of the methods and the strategy? Would you get the true answer to that question? Go not in search of it to the publications of the various missionary boards themselves, go not to the several legislative bodies, General Conventions, General Assemblies, and General Conferences which stand back of the boards; but go to the actual forces in the field, go to the men and women at the front; they will tell you what the trouble is. They will tell you with much warmth, that one of the chief hindrances to missionary progress is denominational rivalry :—not rivalry there, but here; not a spirit of competition and eagerness for the preeminence among the missionaries themselves, but among Sectarian Boards, Conventions, and Committees in these United States. Once let American Christianity begin marching upon the heathen stronghold with that unity of method which the Sirdar showed in marching upon Khartoom and we shall see results worth scoring. But marvelous as would be the consequences abroad, the practical effect upon Church Unity here at home would be more signal still. It has been lately stated upon high authority that less than one-half the people of this country acknowledge allegiance to-day to any form of organized Christianity.

One of the superintendents of schools of one of our largest cities is quoted as having said that in the municipality which he represented there were more than a hundred thousand children of school age who did not know of the existence of such a book as the Bible. To the mind of one who loves his country, who believes that democracy as a form of government depends for perpetuity upon character in the citizens, that righteousness as Christians understand it is the only salt that can keep "popular institutions" from falling away to rottenness, such figures are startling indeed.

But why is it that our young men and women can afford to take up this attitude of indifference towards organized religion? How do they justify themselves? Largely in this way, I fancy: they look at the "religious world" as they have heard the journalists call it; and they consider it, what it is. They see it made up of a group of circles, ranging all the way from Roman Catholics at one end of the line to Christian Scientists at the other. "These are so many religious clubs" they say to themselves. "Each seems to have its own club-house and its own set of officers. Even were I disposed to join one of them, I should be puzzled to make a selection; and, perhaps, I could not afford the fees. On the whole, I

think I will let my membership in my trade-union, and my order, and my Friendly Society suffice."

And then as to the question of public education, why is it that the children in our schools cannot be authoritatively taught the elements of right conduct? Why are Christian morals tabooed as part of the food upon which the youth of the Republic should be nourished? Why are such simple questions as, What is thy duty towards God? and What is thy duty towards thy neighbor? elbowed out of children's minds by questions as to the specific gravity of platinum and the latitude and longitude of Zanzibar? I charge it upon our "unhappy divisions." Let the defendant meet the accusation if he can!

Bishop Johnston in his annual address says: "Out of all the large sums now wasted in keeping up rival religious organizations, enough would be saved to put up model tenements for the poor and erect workingmen's clubs free from the temptations of the saloons. The saloon will continue to be the club-room of poor people till an intelligent Christian Philanthropy provides some innocent substitution. Till this is done, all denunciation of the saloon is mere beating of the air.

The common people, who once heard Christ

gladly, because of His sympathy for them, are being alienated from His Church for the lack of that sympathy. Jesus made men ready to listen to His doctrines by first ministering to their bodily wants. His Church, by caring only for their spiritual welfare to the neglect of their bodily needs, has driven them into all sorts of secret organizations, which have finally become substitutes for the Church. Christian Unity would make it possible to have sick benefits for all needy members of the Church, a funeral at the expense of the Church, and also a small annuity to those who required help when the bread winner was removed.

After all these local needs had been provided for there would be enough to send a simple, easily understood gospel to the heathen, which would prove itself so superior to their old superstitions, that it would soon be accepted. Now the Chinaman says : " Catholic he say, Protestant he go hell-ways ; Protestant say Catholic he go hell-ways ; me keep my Joss " (Chinese God). The now celebrated Quadrilateral would not only unite Christians at home, but would so consolidate the missionary enterprises abroad, that heathenism would speedily be undermined and completely overthrown in the present century. So mote it be. May the Lord hasten it in His time.

I was met by one of our people in Broadway, New York, last summer. He was there on professional business, which doubtless netted him a large sum of money, as he was putting up at the Waldorf-Astoria. He asked what I was doing in New York, to which question I replied that I was begging money to provide our people with religion. "You know we have plenty of everything else, but we are short on religion, and I have to import it."

But why do we have to import money to carry on religion, but for the fact of the division of the one Church of God into the five petty antagonistic spiritual clubs and societies of our county? Combine these societies into the one Church of Christ, and we will have money and to spare.

IX. RECONCILER AND PEACEMAKER.

There are many hopeful signs in the fact, that most of the Christian Societies in the United States are beginning to discern the pettiness of their old denominationalism, and are awakening to a sense of what true Catholicity demands. Moreover, what is better still, kindness and sympathy are coming to the fore in unexampled plenitude. We are discovering how many of our old alienations were founded

upon strife of words rather than strifes of fact. A little of the oil of gladness goes a long way as a lubricant. What we now need is to get near each other. When the picket-guards of bivouacking armies find themselves within speaking distance, they are very apt to acknowledge one another not such bad fellows after all.

The true policy of every denomination, that is among us, is to frankly recognize as *bona fide* members of Christ's Holy Church Universal, all who have been baptized with water into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; and to see whether it cannot modestly contribute something that shall help this sacramental host to realize its already latent oneness.

The Episcopal Society in this new world stands at the parting of the way. After a century of infancy, a century of childhood, and a century of adolescence, she has come at last to her majority, and reports for duty. Her errand is that of *reconciler and peacemaker* among those who read the same Bible, honor the same Sacraments, and love the same Lord Jesus Christ.

If we would enlist the strong minds, the warm hearts, the strenuous souls of our day in the service of the Church of Christ, the Church

of Christ must be attractively presented. Her grandeur must be appreciated, and the wide sweep of her comprehensiveness displayed. The trouble is that we too often identify the Church of God with all manner of trifling details that are no part of its essence, and then lift up hands of holy horror if one whom we are trying to win retorts contemptuously: "Is that the society, that the spiritual commonwealth, that the fellowship of souls, in the behalf of which you would have me work myself up into a fine enthusiasm? Loftier aims absorb me and larger hopes. Build your little city. I go my way."

But would you turn this haughty critic's sneer into a prayer for guidance? Show him the true picture of the Church of God. Let him see the length and the depth and the height of it. Open his eyes to behold that innumerable company of faithful men who even now, to-day, in all climes, and under all skies, are making the imitation of Christ their persistent aim. When the kingdom of God is thus conceived of, when it is recognized as gathering up into itself all that has been most precious in the past, and all that makes for greater spiritual achievement in days to come, we cease to wonder at a saying attributed to one of primitive days: "He that hath

God for his Father hath the Church for his mother."

We are tempted to grow hard, we are tempted to grow bitter, we are tempted to grow cynical; for human life, as we see it, has much that is repellent to show, much that is despicable, much that is sordid. Can there be any hope for such a world as this? The vision of the city at unity with itself is God's reply. For this it is worth one's while to live. For this, some, peradventure, might even dare to die.

X. THE WATCHWORDS.

We have now come into the watchwords of unity. In the field of religion, it is love; in dogma, the Apostles' Creed; in theology the Nicene Creed; in church government, coordination of Episcopacy, Presbyterianism, and Congregationalism in one harmonious whole; in worship, classification to suit the diverse needs of the worshippers. These are the conditions which will unite the broken fragments of Christ's Church into one glorious whole, clothed in the seamless robe of charity, which believeth all things, hopeth all things, and endureth all things. By the grace of God we must get out of us the last vestige of bigotry and prejudice, and learn the beatitudes of charity. No system of theology or philosophy of

the sacraments is to be imposed upon any one as terms of communion. Every minister is to be allowed to teach that explanation of the Apostles' Creed he believes, and every layman to accept that which explains most to him. Until we can learn to bear with one another's differing ways in theological, philosophical, and sacramental practices, our vision of Church Unity is a will-o'-the-wisp. And also in regard to the question of ordination to the ministry. Unless those who care nothing for the historic continuity of the ministry persuade themselves that it is worth while to conserve that ministry for the sake of those who do care very much about it, it will be a long time before Church Unity can be realized—if ever.

The plan proposed in articles 11 and 15 would secure the continuity of order so dear to Christians of all denominations. I am anxious to preserve the continuity of Protestant Episcopal orders, and I am equally anxious to preserve that of every other body of Christians. For each and every one has contributed something necessary and essential to the well-being and perfection of the Church of God in these United States of America; and it is only by the union of them all that the Catholic Church in America can be made—as the union of the Missouri, Ohio, Arkan-

sas and Red, make the mighty Mississippi. And the result of this union will be, that in the place of the Latin uniformity of the middle ages, we will have the unity of the early Church, with a polity large enough to cover the round world.

I am through, and the result is in God's hands. I believe that much good will come out of the spirit in which this week's worship has been conducted. I have spoken what I believe is God's word to this generation, and I believe you hear His voice in your hearts—deep answering deep. May God answer the prayer of many devout and spiritual souls among us, that Baldwin County in the State of Georgia may be the first to have Church Unity in these United States. For the good of mankind and unto the glory of God may you have this high honor and undying fame.

If I can get another clergyman to join me we can win this County for Church Unity, and then the State, and then the Nation. For whenever this is done in any one County anywhere in the United States, the battle is won for Church Unity in America, and also for the round world. When the Spanish flag fell at Santiago, and Dewey's guns sank the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay, we became a world power. It may have been decreed in Wall

Street and in Washington that this was for commercial gain ; but I believe that it was permitted in the courts of heaven, in order that the knowledge and love of Christ might be, "where'er the sun does his successive journeys run !"

America is an epitome of every race and clime in the world, in closest ties of kindred and commerce with every race and clime in the world. So much so, that when the united voice of America speaks, every race and clime hears in his own language and in his own tongue the wonderful Word of God. So much so, that Church Unity in America ultimately means, that the stars and stripes of the American flag will be transformed into the seamless robe of Christ's peace and love, knitting the kingdoms of the world into the kingdom of God. So mote it be. Amen ! And may the peace of God be with you always.

Kinship of God and Man.

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Elbert Hubbard, Editor of the Philistine.—I must congratulate you on the insight you show into the heart of things. So here are all good wishes.

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For sale by the Author

REV. J. J. LANIER, Milledgeville, Ga.

Kinship of God and Man.

- I. Kinship the bond uniting God and man.
- II. Trinity in unity of man and nature reveal the trinity in unity of God.
- III. Since man is trinity in unity of spirit, mind, and body, the salvation of man is perfecting these by the Incarnation of God ; which, on account of sin, is only begun on earth.
- IV. Therefore, Christ, for us men and for our salvation, descended from heaven to earth, and from earth to hell, and preached His gospel.
- V. And, to save the quick and the dead, established His Church on earth and in hell.
- VI. Revealing that the purpose of eternal punishment is for the salvation of all.
- VII. Which is progressively developed on earth and in Paradise.
- VIII. Until perfection is attained in the resurrection of the body.
- IX. Which exalted divine activities is ascension into heaven.

Volume I.—Good and Evil.

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- IV. And Perfected by Crucifixion.

PART II.—SIN.

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- VIII. Eternal Life.
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- III. Only Those Who Become Sinless Attain Unto the Resurrection from the Dead.
- IV. Salvation Completed in the Resurrection of the Body.
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- VI. Salvation Progressively Developed in Paradise.

PART III.—ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

- VII. And Revealed that Eternal Punishment is for the Salvation of All.
- VIII. Salvation of All (*Continued*).
- IX. Alpha and Omega.

COMMENTS.

The Churchman, New York :

The Rev. J. J. Lanier, rector of St. Stephen's, Milledgeville, Ga., completes his study of "The Kinship of God and Man," the first volume of which we noticed on March 15, 1902, with a second volume, having for its sub-title "The Master-Key." (Whittaker, \$1.) This Master-Key is found in a full recognition of what is implied in the revelation of the Triune God through the trinity in unity of Man and Nature. This is an expansion, as the author recognizes in his preface, of Illingsworth's thought in the Bampton Lectures for 1894 on "Personality, Human and Divine," in which it was said that "the actual Trinity of God explains the potential trinity of man ; and our anthropomorphic language follows from our theomorphic minds." The salvation of man is here discerned in the perfecting of spirit, mind and body by the Incarnation ;—begun on earth, continued in Paradise, and perfected by the Beatific Vision. Punishment thus becomes an essential part of redemption, which is declared to be ultimately for all.

Rt. Rev. Thomas M. Clark, Rhode Island :

The Rev. Mr. Lanier's "Kinship of God and Man" deals with some of the most profound and important truths which we are ever called to consider. The style of the book is as clear as the nature of the subject admits, and the argument by which the kinship of God and man is established is so convincing that it must secure the respect

and attention of those who have been led astray by a superficial and materialistic philosophy. The current objections to the doctrine of the Trinity are effectually answered by the argument of this book. Sooner or later it will be likely to have a large circulation.

The Journal, Atlanta, Ga. :

Volume II of this book—The Master-Key—follows close upon the first volume which was issued in the spring. The book is dedicated to The American People, and the first volume contains an introduction by Hon. Logan E. Bleckley.

The book is deeply thoughtful and scientific, as the title would suggest. Already it has met with recognition from ministers and students all over the country, who have commented on its strength and the profitable pleasure derived from reading it. Prof. T. J. Woofter, Principal of Normal School in Georgia Normal and Industrial College, Milledgeville, Ga., in a letter to the author says :

“ I have read it nearly all, in parts, and have enjoyed every part. Let me say that it is a wonderfully strong book. You have done more than any one else I know to make religion really rational (no effort at alliteration). I was especially delighted with your treatment of matter and spirit in the introduction—of miracles and the new theology—of ‘as a man thinketh in his heart’—and other parts too numerous to mention. . . . In the most radical of these—hell, paradise, heaven, and progressive salvation, you will stir up the good old orthodox blood to righteous indignation (so-called). Look out for many feet to jump on you here. But look serenely out. You can afford to do so.”

But perhaps the most thorough criticism comes from Dr. C. H. Strong, of St. John's Church, Savannah, Ga., who seems to have gotten at the core of the book, and states its purpose in a very able manner :

"The very best book of the new theology which we have seen lately are the two volumes of 'Kinship of God and Man,' by the Rev. J. J. Lanier, of Milledgeville, Ga. And yet no one would more quickly disclaim the title of new than the author, for he has no ambition to found a new creed, to which the words of Scripture have to be strained, but his very evident purpose is to interpret the words of Jesus and St. Paul as *they must have been understood by the men of their generation*, before the Punic fathers, who influenced Roman theology, had begun their work of adaptation. The volumes are 'new' then, only in contrast with some prevalent modern conceptions. They very happily unite the two essentials of authority and reasonableness. The master-key of the entire work, penetrating the author's conception of nature, man, and God is the doctrine of the Trinity. This truth, instead of being dealt with very gingerly, as an article of faith which is to be accepted on authority, but hidden away from the investigations of reason, on the plea that it 'transcends reason,' is vigorously grasped and shown to be the great truth of all life.

"He very properly discerns that while the nature of God may transcend human reason, yet the mode of His *esse* and *existere* so far as it is given in revelation, is a fit subject for reason to investigate, for revelation is designed to reveal and not to conceal. Hence he does not hesitate to show the entire reasonableness of this fundamental truth; nay, more, demonstrating that human and divine life can only exist in this mode.

"Abundance of illustrations take the subject out of philosophy and put it in evidence before minds, which are unused to the ways of metaphysics, and can only see truth in objective form. He is equally fortunate in dealing with the trinity of faculties in man. Here he is one with the best of modern philosophers—Maurice, Martineau and Fiske. We have rarely seen a better expo-

sition of the Ego or soul of man ; an exposition which, while it has all the logical acumen of Hegel and Kant, has at the same time the limpid clearness of Martineau.

" From his clear and forceful exposition of the trinity, which we have no hesitation in saying is the best we have ever seen, he passes out into the circle of other truths.

" Time would fail us to mention, how his keen thought lights upon and illumines the entire round of what hitherto has been theologic, and often unnatural dogma, as the heat lightning dashes the darkness away from the entire circle of the heavens, and for a moment we see the flash of light ' which lighteth every man that comes into the world.'

" For example : God creates evil, and what we call evil is for building up the backbone of manhood and womanhood within us ; election is a true doctrine, truer than the most rigid predestinarian would insist, only it is by the orderly processes of nature and is to ends that shall be of service to others ; in a word it is not to selfishness, but to privilege and responsibility.

" Salvation is not the petty doctrine of selfish safety, but the perfect sanity or healthfulness of the triad within man ; his body beyond the power of disease and suffering ; his mind beyond the power of prejudices and ignorance ; his spirit beyond the power of sin and evil ; and all three, being thus negatively quit of all disturbance are then positively open to eternal development. And eternal is the adjective that does not synchronize with everlasting, but is both timeless and divine.

" The best and clearest part of the work is the author's treatment of the vexing question of retribution. We have not time to elucidate this portion of the book ; but we can only advise the layman, who feels both the horror of the popular doctrine and is at the same time disturbed by the permanency of a habituated and power-

less will, to approach this section with candor and openness of conviction.

"In conclusion, 'Kinship of God and Man' is a book for thoughtful laymen; and will, without doubt, be of great service, as it has already been to the eminent jurist whose letter prefaces the first volume.

"Clergymen may miss the usual theologic commonplaces, the systematic arrangements of topics, the *referenda ad patres*, but we feel sure that the fresh conceptions, the strong and vigorous style, the abundance of illustrations cast forth by a fertile mind, like pearls out of a fathomless sea, will strengthen their grasp upon the vital truths of Christianity.

"Such in haste and briefly is something of the much that I would say. I can only thank the author for writing the book; and comforting him with the thought—my own often comfort—that the Seven Thousand in the Caves will be less inclined than ever to bow the knee; and will look forward to some future day on Carmel."

Comments on Vol. I.

The Eagle, Brooklyn, N. Y.:

When the author of Ecclesiastes wrote as the epitaph of human life, "Vanity of Vanities," the only light which came to him in the darkness of his condition was his belief that God would sometime reveal the explanation. Believing that fresh light is thrown on the eternal problem of "good and evil" by the two facts—the resurrection and the doctrine of evolution—"of which Christ is the supreme author and product," the Rev. J. J. Lanier, of Milledgeville, Ga., has published "Kinship of God and Man."

. . . This book, which is the first volume to be issued . . . is of priceless value, for it reduces to clear and simple propositions many a mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations.

Rt. Rev. Hugh Miller Thompson, Mississippi :

I have read it with great enjoyment. It is fresh, mainly original. . . . I am very much obliged to you.

Rt. Rev. Samuel H. Wells, Spokane :

Intensely interesting; and thank you for it.

Rt. Rev. Arthur L. Williams, Nebraska :

The argument is very striking and forceful.

Rt. Rev. Alex. C. Garrett, Texas :

I have read your book with great pleasure and profit.

Rt. Rev. Davis Sessums, Louisiana :

I congratulate you heartily upon the completion of your work. I earnestly hope that your writing will be widely read and accomplish much good.

Rt. Rev. George F. Seymour, Springfield :

There is so much in it, so many points raised and issues submitted, that careful attention is required on the part of the reader. . . . I am sure that I shall agree with most that you say.

Rt. Rev. Ethelbert Talbot, Central Pennsylvania :

I am just now about half through Vol. I, and am enjoying it greatly, and find it very helpful and suggestive.

Rev. L. C. Baker, Bala, Pa.:

No ordinary book. . . . A most successful attempt at that restatement of the Christian faith which the Church now so greatly needs.

The Church Standard :

In short, we have here a philosophy of Christianity.
. . . His style is vivid and forcible, and his arguments are put forward with manifest sincerity.

Church Eclectic :

So long as we have clergy who can preach such sermons we need not fear for the decay of pulpit influence.
. . . The writer deals with his subject from a fresh point of view, while adhering to Catholic doctrine.

The American Church Sunday-School Magazine :

Mr. Lanier's treatment of . . . death and punishment, of repentance and forgiveness, shows that he is a deep thinker, and that he believes, above all else, in the necessity of a life hid in Christ. . . . We shall look with interest for the second and concluding volume upon this subject.

The Universalist Herald, Canon, Ga.:

It fairly bristles with Reason, Scripture and good Sense. We heartily recommend the book to our people everywhere.

The Christian Union, Atlanta, Ga.:

The author thinks, and thinks for himself, and in some instances thinks out to some startling conclusions. . . . Buy and read the book.

The Evangelist, New York :

The book is forcibly and clearly written and its aim is good whether we agree with the author's thought and expression or not.

Comments on Vol. II.

Church Standard, Phila.:

In mental vigor and agility, as well as in the use of vigorous and vivid language. Mr. Lanier frequently re-

minds us of Henry Drummond. . . . In the study of great mysteries particularly the "last things" of death and beyond death, he thinks boldly and he speaks freely. . . . It is a book to do good and not harm. It will quicken thought in the strong and confirm faith in the wavering.

Rt. Rev. Thomas F. Gailor, Tennessee :

I thank you very much for the second volume of your book on "The Kinship of God and Man," and have read it with pleasure and profit. I think it is calculated to do great good and is evidently the fruit of wide reading and careful thinking. The latter part especially is striking when we consider the many crude theories that are extant on the subject of retribution.

Rt. Rev. Alex. C. Garrett, Texas :

. . . Your book which I have read with much pleasure and profit.

Rt. Rev. George F. Seymour, Springfield :

. . . Your valuable and interesting work . . . and send you all good wishes.

Rt. Rev. Alex. Mackay-Smith, Pennsylvania :

With congratulations . . . may the sale of your book be large and influential in this age when unbelief so largely prevails.

The Outlook, New York :

The late Dr. Dale, of England, used to say that the doctrine of the trinity is the central and formative truth of Christian theology. Mr. Lanier goes further : "Trinity in unity is seen to be the explanation of all things, the universal and necessary truth of the universe." He writes with the enthusiasm naturally attendant on a great discovery. Applying the master-key of trinity and unity to theological problems, Mr. Lanier goes on to show that it

“is the universal and necessary truth of earth, hell, and heaven ; birth, death and resurrection ; salvation and eternal punishment—the only possible form in which life can exist.”

Rev. L. C. Baker, Bala, Pa. :

It is a virtual restatement of the Christian faith from the highest point of view to which the human mind has been lifted in these later days. It is most interesting, able, and satisfactory. I have no doubt it will be widely read and excite great interest.

Rev. Harold Thomas, Florence, S. C.

I hope your books will have a wide circulation.

J. C. Whittaker, Rutledge, Ga.:

Hoping you may live long to preach the truth.

American Church S. S. Magazine :

It is a book worth while reading ; one that rouses a clearer and steadier comprehension, and that opens the avenues of the mind with large vistas of faith and hope.
. . . Mr. Lanier has gone a great way in finding the clues to the problems of the world.

Thomas S. Bean, Clarkesville, Ga.:

I sincerely hope that many editions of this work will be necessary to supply the demand for it.

Prof. J. R. Mosley, Macon, Ga.:

Your very profound, suggestive, and helpful book.

L. Y. Bradbury, Winder, Ga.:

The manner and style of the book will certainly have an awakening influence when read by advanced thinkers. Hope you will succeed in selling a large number, as the people so much need such literature to lift them out of the old heathen ruts.

Miss M. R. Pearson, May Hill, Ramsay, I. O. M., Great Britain :

I remember some years ago, reading in a paper or magazine, that there would have to be some new revelation, something to take the place of the old ; for that was about played out, and was bound to lose influence more and more. . . . At the time of reading I felt that there was a certain truth in the article. Well, now—we have the revelation—and it is nothing new after all—only a letting in of light on the old ! And how wonderful it is ! If I were rich I should like to place it in every library ; as it is, I am lending to any who care to read it.

